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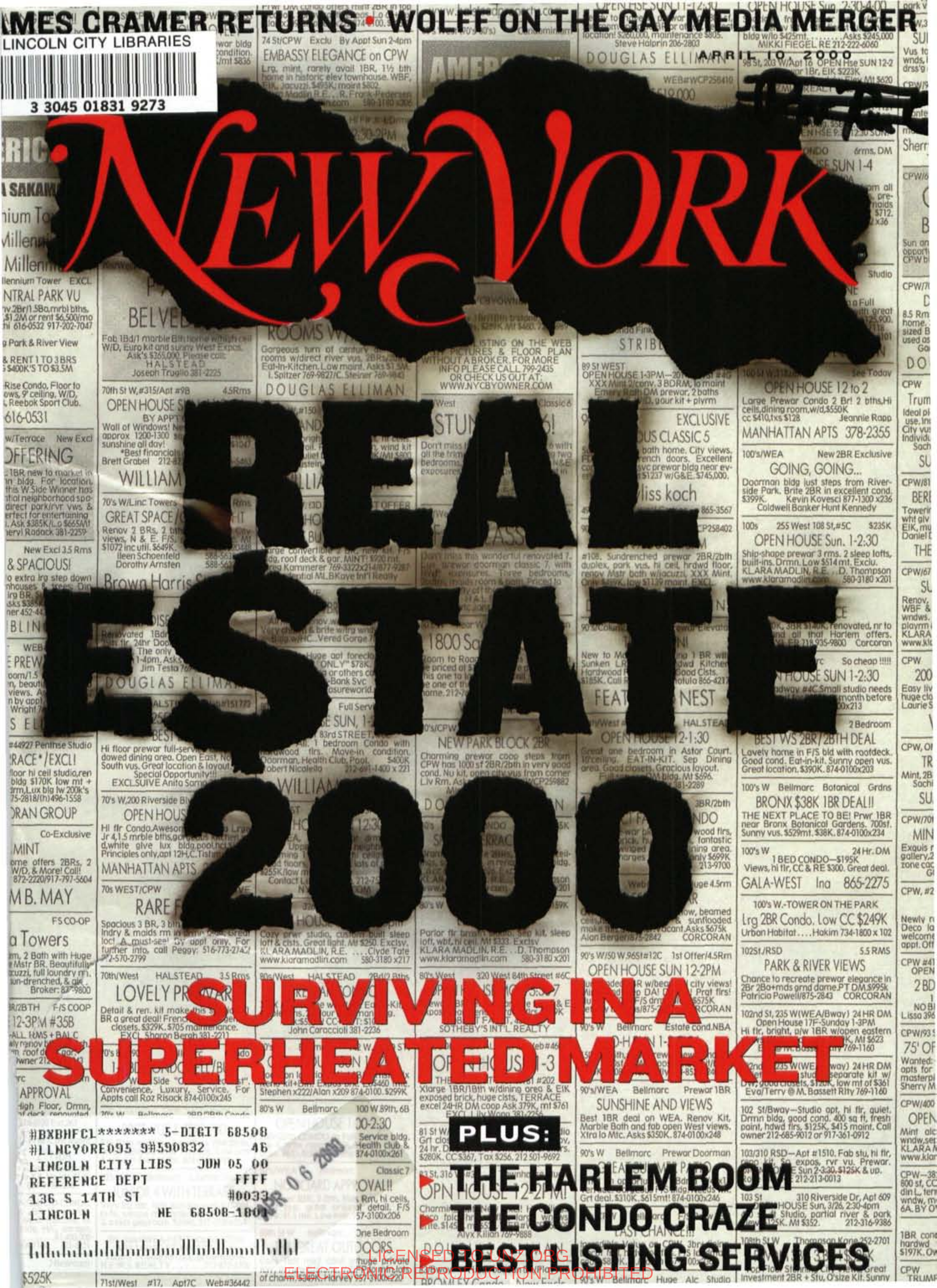

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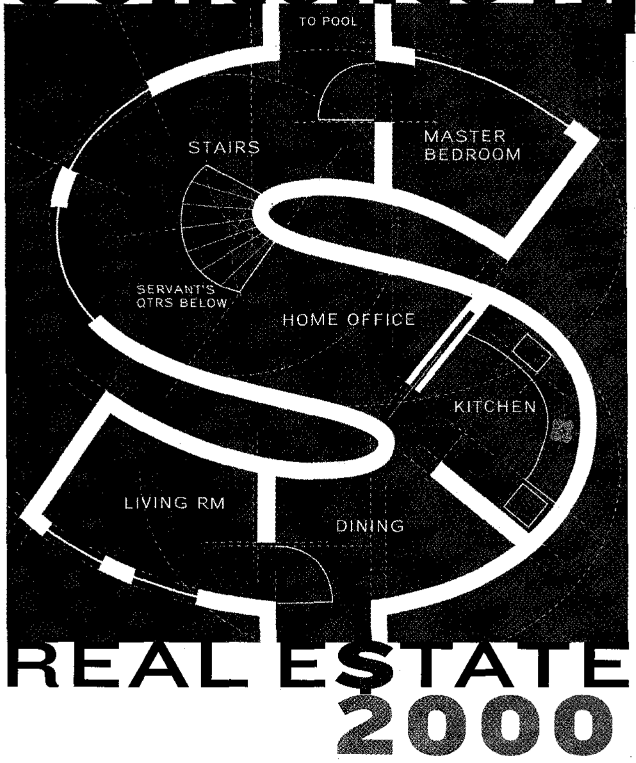

> *"Nobody knows how high it will go or when it will stop. I mean, how greedy can everybody get? I guess pretty greedy."*
>
> JOANNE GREENE, PAGE 120

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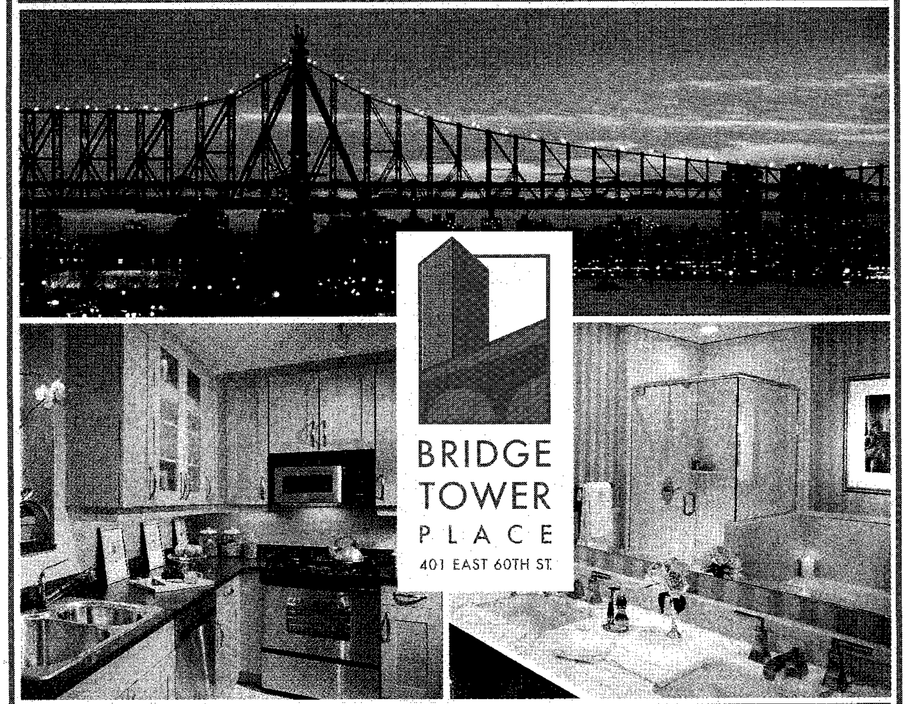
THE HEIGHT OF STYLE



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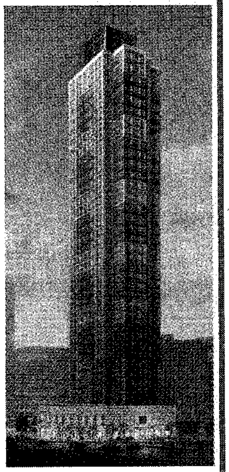
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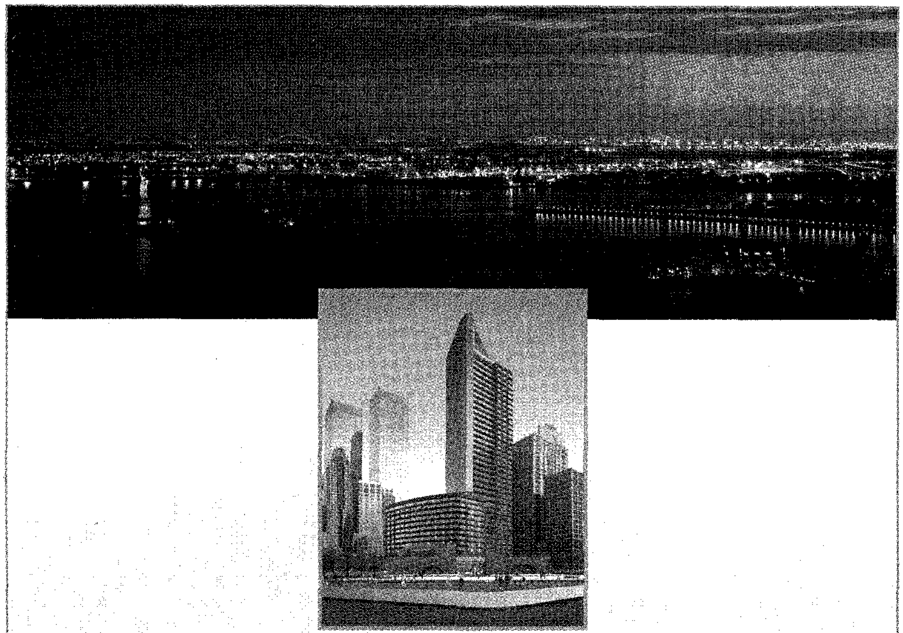

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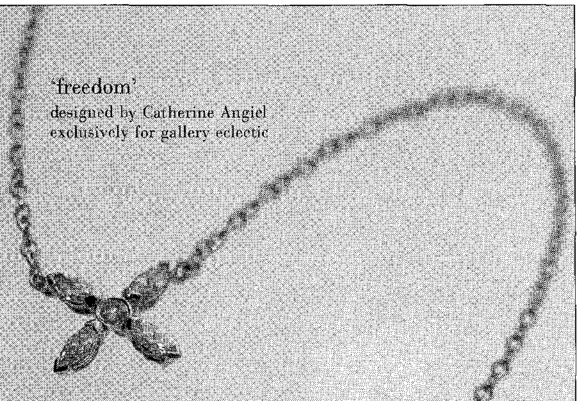

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BETWEEN THE LINES

Capital Gain

IF JIM CRAMER DIDN'T EXIST, ALAN Greenspan would have had to invent him. Cramer's been cheering the bull market since before there even *was* a bull market. He supplies his own brand of rational exuberance both from the sidelines—he has written for *Time, GQ, SmartMoney,* and elsewhere—and in the game itself, as a money manager and founder of his own hedge fund. Cramer even used to cover the stock market in the pages of *New York,* as the magazine's financial columnist, but four years ago he left to start up his own venture in new media, TheStreet.com, a financial Website that currently serves more than 100,000 paid subscribers.

Now, several thousand NASDAQ points later, Cramer is returning to his beat at *New York*; you'll find his column on page 22. "I'm going to continue where I left off," he says, "telling the inside story behind this amazing bull market and giving insight into how you can figure it out and beat it."

Cramer's unique insider's perspective and his passion have been missed at the magazine, and apparently the feeling was mutual. "I like to be read by my peers on Wall Street, and I like to be read by the people where I live," he told us, "and the only time that has ever happened in all my years of writing is when I wrote for *New York* Magazine. It's been driving me nuts that I lost that great audience, and it is terrific to be back and to be read again!"

Four years is a long time to be away. Back then, Yahoo! was selling below 20, and Amazon.com hadn't even gone public. In the interim, the business page replaced the sports page as everyone's first stop in the morning; Cramer's longtime passion (he insists he first fell in love with the stock market in second grade) has become the national pastime.

Now the market is entering a new, more volatile phase (say good-bye to the days of easy pickings in the tech sector), and ordinary investors will have to be cagier than ever. We can't think of a better columnist to guide us through the future highs and lows than James Cramer. ▬

NYPD Blues

The Diallo verdict and its angry aftermath; auction-house price-fixing barely raises an art-world eyebrow.

IN HIS SENSITIVE AND INTERESTING PIECE "The Roots of Outrage" [March 13], Craig Horowitz makes a mistake of logic that I believe is shared by many of those upset with the Diallo verdict. He bemoans Mayor Giuliani's unwillingness "to acknowledge that an innocent man's being killed by the police is by definition an injustice." I disagree with his assumption. What happened to Amadou was a tragic accident, but an accident all the same. To call it "an injustice" suggests that there was a human agency guilty of some moral lapse. The Albany trial answered that question with regard to the four police officers.

Simcha Pollack
QUEENS

HOW CAN A POLICE OFFICER WHO DOES not live in the community do a good job? How can he have a clue as to how the community lives and works, or care? Why do we still allow this type of policing in New York? Isn't some knowledge of the community needed to police it correctly? In my neighborhood, I'm afraid to look the cops in the eye.

J. L. Anselmi
MANHATTAN

AS A YOUNG AFRICAN-AMERICAN MAN, I now have a better understanding of the fear Jews must have experienced in Nazi Germany while watching members of their community taken away, abused, and eventually murdered by the police. Whether it is the faces of the NYPD or each and every person that participated in the standing ovation given to John Rocker—I am now more afraid of the white community than ever. If we can't find it within ourselves to defend one another against abusive attacks based on religion, ethnicity, or sexual preference, then what will stop us from eventually becoming the Nazis of the new millennium?

Duane Rochester
MANHATTAN

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Gavel Gazing

AS SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN IN THE ART trade for over 50 years, I was not particularly shocked to learn of allegations of collusion between the auction houses Sotheby's and Christie's ["Prix Fixe?," by Christopher Mason, March 20]. Everyone in the trade has lived for years with the fact that selling rates were the same and that both houses had the same type of sale a day apart and with common days of exhibition viewing. What was astounding for me was to read reports that for some unearthly reason, written records were kept.

Herbert Roman
MANHATTAN

THAT SOTHEBY'S SOLD FAKES TO HERBERT Black is far more scandalous than the fact that they are alleged to have set the same commissions as their main competitor. Price fixing is a small sin by comparison.

Tamara Beck
MANHATTAN

Puppy Love

FINALLY, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART! I am referring to William Wegman and the pictorial in your March 20 issue that features his pulchritudinous pooches decked out in designer fashions ["Glamour Shots"]. Wegman says, "I love touching dogs' paws, feeling how rough the pads get after being on the city sidewalks. And then the rest of the foot is quite soft." My friends think I'm crazy when I go into great detail about how the hair behind a golden retriever's ears gets all crimped and downy in humid weather. Or when I describe its happily wagging tail, with its long, flowing hair, as resembling something created by Dr. Seuss. Let's see more of these glamorous, sleek, athletic models in future issues. Maybe an article on how they stay so slim?

Martta Rose
MONTCLAIR, N.J.

Correction The neoprene bath mats recently featured in "Best Bets" (March 6) were designed and distributed by Authentics Ltd., England.

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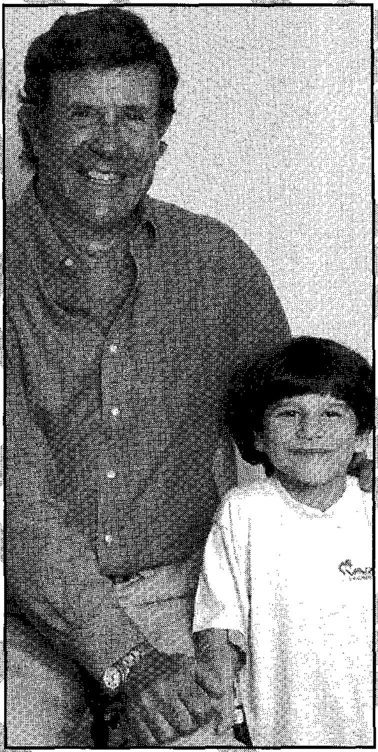

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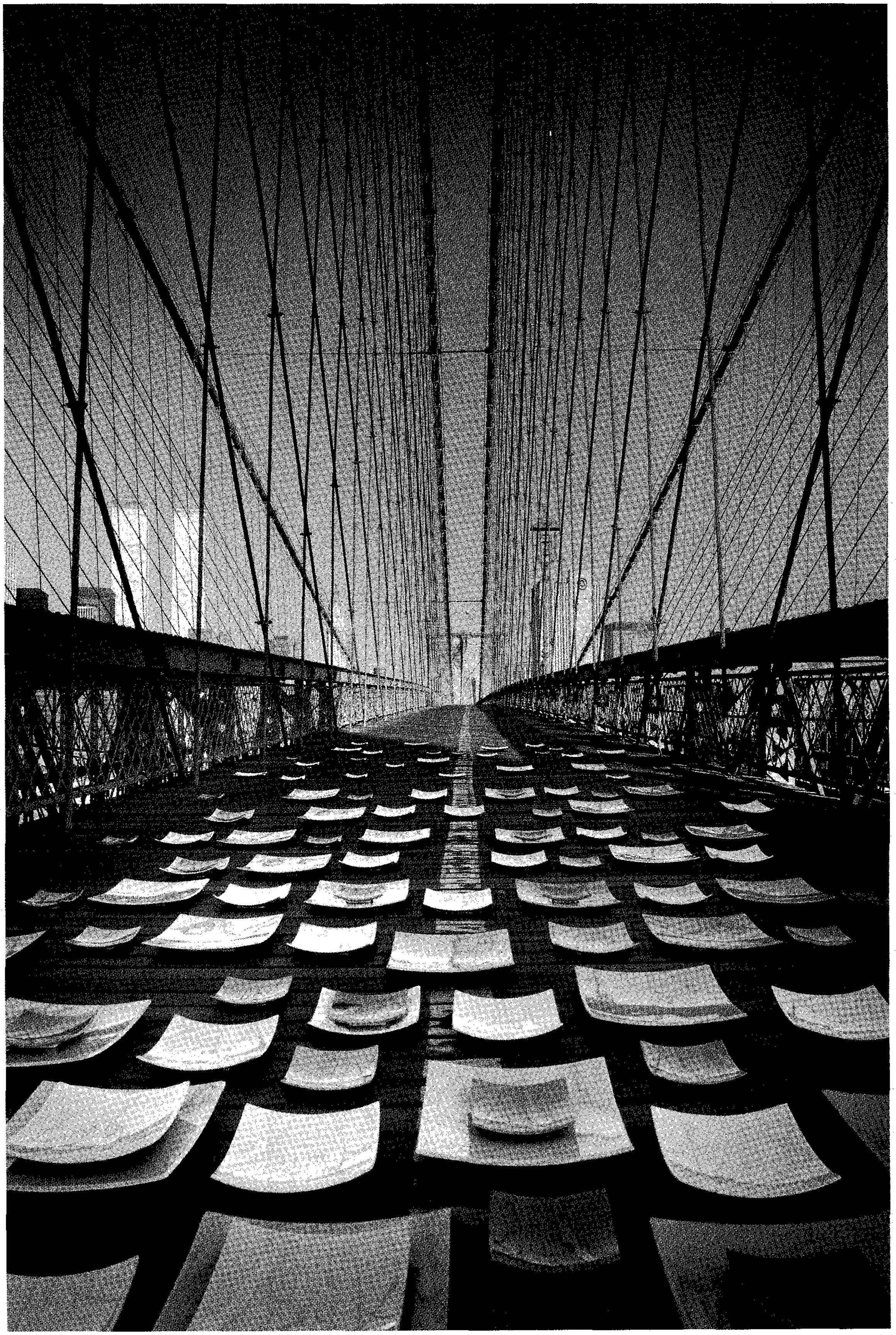

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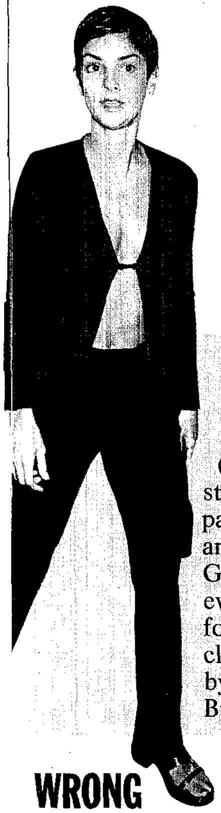


CASARES EMBRACES . . . MOTHERHOOD

Sapphic love has gotten so mainstream that trendsetter **Ingrid Casares** (pictured) has moved on to other things. The 34-year-old bisexual clubster helped make lesbianism a national pastime over the last decade by palling around with **Madonna** while seducing the likes of **Sandra Bernhard** and **k. d. lang**. But now she's three months pregnant by her boyfriend, a German model named **Dennis Schaller**. Casares, who had been in a funk ever since the arrest of her partner **Chris Paciello** on murder charges, fell for the 25-year-old mannequin six months ago, when she met him at her club Bar Room in South Beach. With Madonna expecting her second baby, it may be the death knell for fashionable nightlife as we know it. Sad. But at least the dad's not **David Crosby**.

WRONG MANN AT THE MIKE

Moviemaker **Michael Mann** is ready for his close-up—even when it's not his turn. At the ShoWest movie convention for theater owners, held in Las Vegas, the Oscar-nominated director of *The Insider* was asked to introduce **Muhammad Ali** at the Sony Pictures luncheon attended by such stars as **Mel Gibson**, **Cameron Diaz**, and **Bill Murray**. Mann was chatting with **Arnold Schwarzenegger** amid the bustling backstage crowd when organizers called out the name of the next person to go onstage. "Arnold said to me, 'Michael! That's you! That's you!' " Mann recalls. But it wasn't—the presenters had introduced **Mike Medavoy**, Schwarzenegger's producer for his upcoming movie *The Sixth Day*. The wrong Mike bounded to the podium and, as earlier instructed, grandly introduced Ali to a standing ovation. According to one witness, the flabbergasted Schwarzenegger and Medavoy quickly realized the mistake but graciously let the moving moment play out as the show went on—albeit with an altered schedule. Mann seems to have learned something from his onstage gaffe: "This proves directors should *never* take cues from actors," he quips.

WWD MOVES WEST TO PARIS

Now that **Daniel Peres** has graduated from *W*'s Paris office to take over the new, reduced-testosterone *Details*, *W*'s associate editor **Kevin West** has been tapped as his replacement. The buoyantly blond editor, 29, has landed *W*'s coveted European slot, traditionally a stepping-stone to higher positions at the company. "Paris is still the capital of fashion," says Fairchild boss **Patrick McCarthy**, who was Paris-bureau chief for *WWD*, as were **Ben Brantley**, **John Fairchild**, and **James Brady**. "And *W* is a fashion magazine. It's more important than the Washington bureau for the New York *Times*." How's Kevin's French? "He has *college* French," says McCarthy. "We'll send him to Berlitz."

PUFFY'S FLACKS SLAY CABLE FUN

Even in the far-flung reaches of public-access television, no one is safe from the awesome power of **Sean "Puffy" Combs**. The folks at *Da Mented Mindz*—a cable variety show airing on various obscure local stations—say they've been receiving threatening calls from the suits at Arista Records ever since they ran a skit poking fun at Puff Daddy. The sketch, titled "Puffy the Vampire Slayer," depicted the mogul as a hero, but his disgruntled representatives didn't see it that way. The show's creator, **Kevin Keith**, says he was told to give it a rest by two people who identified themselves as reps for Arista, which owns Puffy's Bad Boy Entertainment label. "They were like, 'Sean's going through so much right now.' " says Keith. "They sounded very frustrated." The funnyman also claims that the flacks threatened to stop providing the show with Arista music

UPTOWN GIRL AT DISCOUNT PRICE

The most surprising thing about **Billy Joel**'s selling his Amagansett home to **Jerry Seinfeld** for almost $40 million is that **Christie Brinkley** didn't kill the little pianist when she found out about it. Two years ago, Brinkley accepted a mere $3 million from her ex-husband for her share of the twelve-acre oceanfront estate. Although the pair split in 1994, the matter of the house remained unsettled until 1998, when Brinkley suddenly had to get her hands on as much cash as possible. The former supermodel had invested in the cosmetics company Nu Skin when she signed on to be its spokeswoman in 1997. But the company was doing 70 percent of its business in Asia, and the region's market crisis sent Nu Skin stock plummeting from $28 a share in early 1997 to $16 in January 1998. That's when the blonde goddess came crawling to the gnomish songster to work out the Amagansett question at a fire-sale price. Brinkley's reps did not return calls, and a spokeswoman for Joel would say only, "This sounds like a Christie Brinkley thing."

'hotographs: top, Henry McGee/Globe Photos; bottom, Walter Weissman/Globe Photos.

GUCCI CEO NOT *INSTYLE* ENOUGH?

The doormen for *InStyle* magazine's chic L.A. Oscar soirée unwittingly pulled a pretty *un*stylish move on the night of the big awards. According to a source, while guests including **Dionne Warwick**, **Denise Richards**, and **LL Cool J** socialized with party co-host **Elton John**, Gucci CEO **Domenico De Sole** was being dissed by the overzealous flacks at the door. Since the shindig was packed to capacity, less-recognizable guests were forced to wait outside with celebrity gawkers and autograph hounds. Upon learning that De Sole was among the cold-shouldered crowd, the source says, *InStyle* staff members "just freaked" and scurried out to usher him up the red carpet. Fortunately, the mix-up didn't put a crimp in the gentleman's evening with the stars. Says a Gucci spokeswoman, "Mr. De Sole said he had the most *wonderful* time."

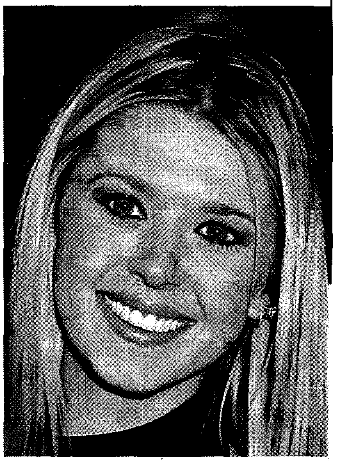
videos if Mr. Combs was goofed on any further. Keith doesn't see what all the fuss is about, since he says the sketch barely referred to the infamous incident in which Combs was arrested for a weapons charge and bribery. Arista did not return calls.

CUOMO GOES UNDERGROUND

For all of his powerful contacts, **Chris Cuomo** just can't seem to get himself into the sewer. At a recent *Manhattan File* party at Henri Bendel, Cuomo told friends that he's having a little trouble with a *20/20* assignment in which he's tasked with exposing the city's subterranean "mole people." As many as 5,000 New Yorkers are believed to be living in a seven-level labyrinth of train tunnels, sewage systems, and electrical conduits below the streets, but the majority of them have so far eluded Cuomo. "Most of them live on level five and six," he said, "but so far I haven't been able to get past level three." Still, there are some molefolk to be seen without descending to the deepest depths of the nether realm—and illuminating them with infrared cameras is apparently quite a trip. "There are all these little green eyes staring out at you from the dark," said Cuomo. "It gets pretty eerie." More eerie than working with **Barbara Walters**?

LUCKY TRIP; TARA REID'S NEW TOY

LUCKY MOVE? Can *Lucky* overcome the bad karma in the ex-*Details* offices? *Details* lasted just half a year as the first tenant on the eighth floor of the cursed Condé Nast tower before the company turned the dogs on the staff and let Fairchild take over the title. Next up in that space: *Lucky*, the *InStyle*-style shopping magazine edited by **Kim France**. April 9, it'll be moving into the mother ship from overflow space at 360 Madison Avenue. So with Condé Nast apparently tight on space in its new building, was *Details* briskly shuttered to make room for the growing upstart? "Seriously, the *Details* decision was made with absolutely no thought or discussion of *Lucky*'s real-estate situation," says one CN executive. "We won't even know if *Lucky* is a go until we get results on the first issue, out mid-May." Meanwhile, whoever moves into the new space may be greeted by a message from a former disgruntled tenant. Ousted *Details* editor **Mark Golin** left behind a sign on his office door warning: ABANDON ALL HOPE, YE WHO ENTER HERE.

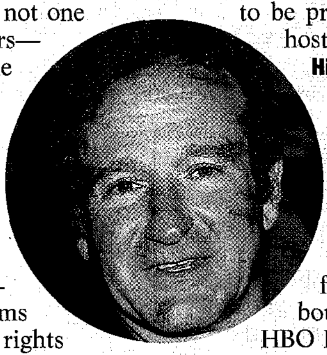


Tara Reid: Malibu Barbie?

PLAY WITH TARA: Soon, fans everywhere will be able to get their hands on **Tara Reid**. While sampling the dishes at Commune, the *American Pie* starlet told us that toy-makers are basing a Barbie-like doll on her Barbie-like self. But the designers can't just toss any old clothes on their mini-Tara. "I have to have a say over what she wears," Reid said. "The deal's not final yet, and I'll kill it if she's not *hot*." As for Tara's film projects, the producers of her upcoming *Josie and the Pussycats* movie might want to furnish the young actress with some tapes of the seventies cartoon about an all-girl, space-traveling rock band. "I can't remember ever seeing an episode," said Reid. Unfortunately, we can.

Additional reporting by Carl Swanson, David Amsden, and Suny Sehgal.

WHICH ROBIN WILLIAMS ARE YOU?



Robin Williams's possible next role doesn't fall far from the tree. The frenetic funnyman is gearing up to play not one but *24* different characters—all trapped in the same body. *Forrest Gump* and *The Insider* scribe **Eric Roth** was talking at *Vanity Fair*'s post-Oscar bash about his new screenplay, *First Person Plural*, based on the memoir by **Cameron West** about his multiple personalities. Williams snatched up the book's rights through his production company, Blue Wolf, and went to Disney in hopes of finding an able pen for the project. While Williams has yet to see a first draft, he seems to be preparing for the part: Playing host in Los Angeles to the likes of **Hillary Clinton**, **Steven Spielberg**, and **Tom Hanks** at a Saks Fifth Avenue–sponsored Cedars-Sinai Medical Center cancer benefit, Williams started manically kissing members of the choir organized by **Rita Wilson** and **Kate Capshaw** before halting a powder-room-bound **Elizabeth Gaine**, wife of HBO Films president **Colin Callender**, for a bizarrely brief embrace. Guess it's not schizophrenia; it's research.

Photographs: top, Pacha/Corbis; bottom, Robin Platzer/Twin Images

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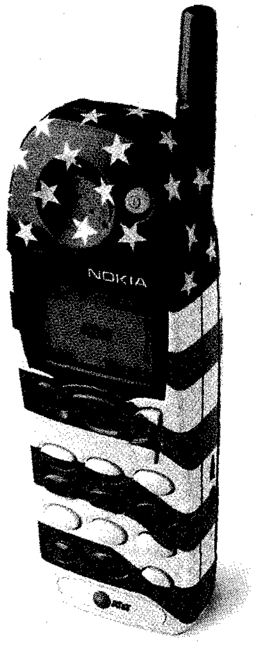

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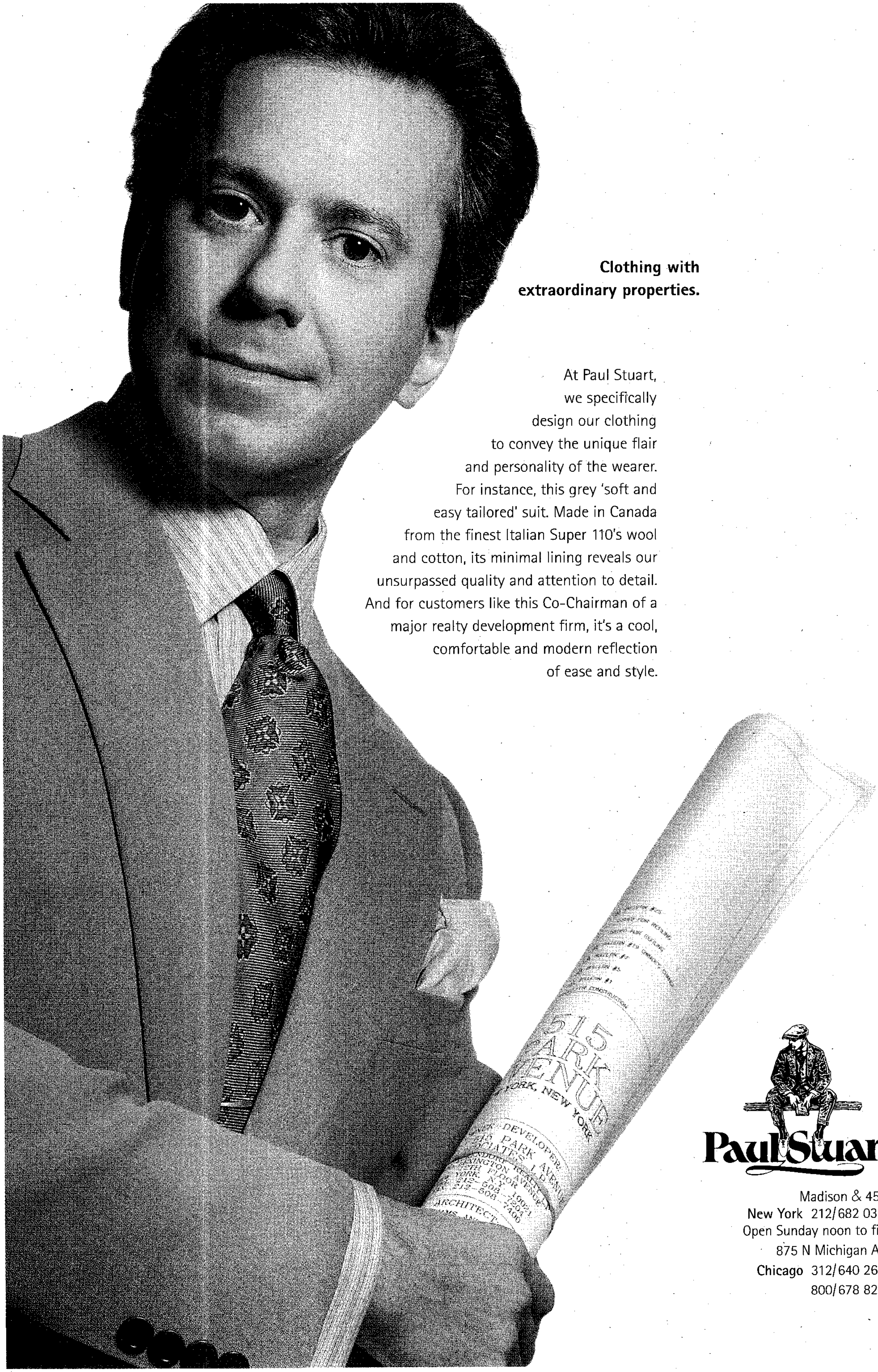

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GOTHAM

Eyes on the *Enterprise*

Power-broker publisher Earl Graves wheels, deals, and eats fancy meals.

DAY IN THE LIFE

WHEN EARL GRAVES makes one of his frequent appearances in the Sunday *Times* society pages, his may not be the only black face, but it is usually the only one framed by giant Edwardian muttonchops. Graves is the founder, CEO, and publisher of *Black Enterprise,* a 30-year-old monthly whose motto is YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT. Graves, who sits on the boards of Daimler Chrysler, Aetna, and American Airlines, has certainly taken his magazine's advice to heart. When his son Earl Jr. (*BE*'s COO and president) was the object of a Metro-North police stop-and-frisk in 1995, the MTA bought a full-page ad in the *Times* to apologize to the Graves family. "That's what money and connections will get you," Graves *père* says candidly. He was one of the few executives arrested during the Diallo protests; now, in the wake of the Dorismond shooting, Graves says bluntly, "People should be demonstrating to kick Giuliani out of office—and I don't mean into the Senate."

The Bed-Stuy-bred Graves, 65, is resting his right leg on a footstool behind his antique desk. An ice bag balances on a swollen knee injured during this morning's workout—preparation for a ski race at Vail in two weeks. "Butch?" Graves barks into the phone to 40-year-old Earl Jr. "The White House called this morning. They want me at an initiative on race April 6. I can't make it"—he is co-chairing a National Conference for Community and Justice dinner with DLJ co-founder William Donaldson that night—"so I want you to represent me." Graves can afford to skip a White House visit: Among the photos lining his forest-green-paneled chambers in the Flatiron district are five of Graves with Bill Clinton, and his day started with a call from Hillary, who wanted to talk campaign strategy.

At noon, DeNelle Leon, one of Graves's two assistants, pokes her head through the door: "The ambassador is still waiting." Tom McDonald, U.S. ambassador to Zimbabwe and an old friend of Graves's, has been sitting in the hall for ten minutes. "I know, I know," Graves shouts. "Stop calling him 'the ambassador'! This is the best Tom's been treated in his life!" For good measure, Graves keeps the diplomat waiting a few more minutes before the two men climb into Graves's chauffeur-driven Chrysler LHS and head to '21,' ➤

POLITICS Campaign-Trail Traffic Report

Dorismond, Week II: Your poll numbers are tanking, and you're *still* not apologizing? Safir showing up on WLIB just doesn't cut it. Even upstaters won't sit still for the status quo much longer. ●

Peace in our time with the Brooklyn Museum—but peace with honor? The papers called it a surrender (and that $5.8 million payoff doesn't smell like victory), but, hey, stepping out of court shows appealing, un-Rudy-like restraint. ○

Out-of-State Cash Week: While Rudy mines dollars in Cleveland, Hill does Hollywood! Nice air-kiss with supporting actor Tom Hanks. Does the beard itch? ◉

W. cozies up to Christie Todd—and the political gears start churning. Would Rudy benefit from a Bush-Whitman ticket, bringing more Republicans to the polls? *Pssst,* Hill: Get Al to pick Ernestine Bradley, and you're a lock. ○

otographs: top, Mathias Braschler; bottom left, Frances M. Roberts; right, Richard B. Levine. Illustration by Ingo Fast.

PRESS BOX

URL Talk

Man bites Mugger: Ledbetter clips *Press*.

THE NEW YORK *PRESS* RAISED ITS profile above the East Village by picking fights with media players and demanding reactions. But former *Village Voice* "Press Clips" columnist James Ledbetter has done the one thing the free weekly just can't tolerate: pretend it doesn't exist. Last fall, Ledbetter (who now works for *The Industry Standard*) filed a trademark application for the name "New York Press or NY Press" as a "printed publication covering life in New York City (politics, media, culture, business, etc.), and an affiliated Website with e-mail newsletters." Ostensibly, this was so Ledbetter could publish his www.newyorkpress.net, a local-media review with links to city publications (but not the *Press*). "I suppose that I still have an itch to write about local media that's not dot-com-oriented," he says. "I'm writing about the New York press. As far as I can tell, no one owns the trademark." The weekly sees something other than sheer coincidence at work. "The word I got was he was deliberately trying to stick it to the New York *Press*," says publisher Michael O'Hara. "Having a printed record of this thing for the last thirteen years, it's certainly ours not to lose." (*Press* owner and "Mugger" columnist Russ Smith wouldn't comment.) Last month, the weekly, which owns the URLs www.nypress.com and www.nypress.net, had its lawyers send Ledbetter a cease-and-desist letter—to which he had not responded by last Monday's deadline. (Ledbetter is seeking legal advice.) "It's not meant to have any relationship to their paper," he insists. "It's not meant to be a parody or a joke. When one reads 'Mugger,' one could have the impression that they have these massive feuds. But they're largely one-way." Perhaps they're just feeling a little mugged themselves.

CARL SWANSON

***Enterprise** continued from page 13*

where the manager, maître d', and headwaiter all glad-hand the CEO. After lunch, Graves introduces McDonald to Tiffany vice-chairman Jim Quinn, sitting two tables away. "Good thing I was wearing the right watch," Graves jokes, pulling back the cuff of his chalk-striped Ralph Lauren suit to reveal a gold Tiffany timepiece.

Back at *Black Enterprise* HQ, Graves looks in on editor-in-chief Alfred Edmond, who favors bow ties and works in a cubbylike office. "What's this? Lunch?" Graves asks, pointing at a Tupperware dish. "Oh, no. That was breakfast," says Edmond apologetically, tucking the leftovers out of sight. Graves returns to the executive suite just as a delegation from the Travelers Group (pictured above) arrives. The three men shut the door to address final details on a $100 million venture-capital partnership the firm has just formed with *Black Enterprise*.

At 5:30 P.M., Graves changes into a tuxedo for a $550-a-head Harlem Y benefit dinner. "You're going to see a lot of people trying to buttonhole me," he says, stepping out of his private bathroom in nothing but a French-cuffed shirt and gartered socks. "The thing is to get the hell up to the dais as fast as I can." When he takes the podium at 8:30, Graves's message is as direct as his magazine's maxim. "We need them to make money," he says firmly, gesturing to the 22 scholarship winners seated before him. "Money makes people pay attention."

ETHAN SMITH

FILM

Big Nothing

Who needs movies about people who *accomplish* things? Stanley Tucci, cinematic champion of the underachiever, thinks less is more.

CINEPLEXES ARE FILLED WITH MOVIES ABOUT people falling in love, coming of age, getting off death row, and, in general, *doing* stuff. Directors don't yell "Action!" for nothing. But then there's Stanley Tucci, New York's leading character actor turned indie lensman, who gravitates toward characters tormented by perfectionism—people who want to do what they're doing so badly that they somehow end up doing nothing. If it seems counterintuitive for an American filmmaker to seem so anti-success, well, that's a subject that also interests Tucci. "I don't think that every movie has to have a happy ending, or be about somebody's success story," the director argues. "That's boring."

Tucci's new film, *Joe Gould's Secret* (which opens this Friday), is a monument to inaction, a tribute to the stillborn creative act—much like his debut, *Big Night*. "You *always* make the same goddamn movie," Tucci told me when I was visiting the *Gould* set in Greenpoint. While *Big Night* followed two restaurateur brothers who aren't particularly good at staying in business, *Gould* follows *New Yorker* scribe Joseph Mitchell (Tucci), who famously profiled Joe Gould (Ian Holm), a Village bohemian and would-be writer, in 1942 and later in 1964—after which Mitchell never published again. It's hardly buoyant cinematic fare, yet Tucci is happy to make it as quiet as he can. On the surface, at least, nothing happens—except failure.

Tucci is far more productive than his characters, yet he's charmed by their ineffectiveness. "People said to me, with *Big Night*, 'What if Frank Sinatra showed up?' That's not the point. "*Nobody* shows up. It's the process that's interesting to me, not the result," he says. "Both movies are not so much about underachievers as they're about artists struggling to create. They're both very different movies, and yet they end up the same."

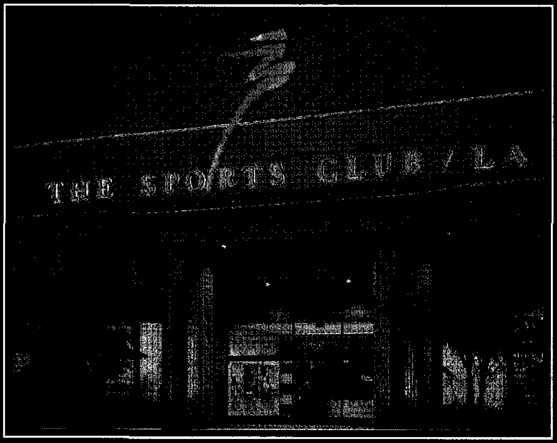
When Tucci finishes shooting the scene—one of many with Mitchell and Gould at Goody's tavern—he watches the video playback on a tiny monitor: "How come this looks . . ." He stops, realizing he's seen it all before. "These positions are the same ones from *Big Night*, the scene at the bar! It's all the same! It's all the same! The *same fucking redundant piece of shit!*"

There's a pause, a gulp of air. "Okay," Tucci says. "Let's get moving." The camera rolls. True to form, he doesn't yell "Action!"

ROBERT KOLKER

Photographs: top, Mathias Braschler; bottom, Mitch Gerber/Corbi

THE FUTURE OF FITNESS HAS ARRIVED.



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Big Chill

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PHOTOGRAPHER: Robert Wyatt

MISERY LOVES COMPANY—AND AN audience. In a print campaign that has been playing out like a soap opera in the fashion glossies, Prada places a young, modish couple in a starkly lit, antiseptic interior. He's a lanky, glum fellow in the Timothy Hutton-circa-*Ordinary People* mold. She's got one of those Chloë Sevigny faces that conveys nothing but numbness. In some of the ads, he's shirtless; in others, she's pulling a sweater over her bare shoulders. It takes an installment or two to realize that we seem to be watching them in postcoital mid-argument—and you get the sense that some terrible truth has just surfaced between them. In this little set piece, the magazine reader is cast in the familiar role of voyeur, charged with piecing together the story from a few elliptical, freeze-frame moments. Unlike Gucci's similarly theatrical current campaign (Fellini-esque party scenes in which everyone stares at the camera—right at *you,* as if you've just made a grand entrance), Prada's is a private drama that's intentionally discomfiting to view. But who can resist the spectacle of a good fight? In the wake of *American Beauty*'s Oscar sweep, Prada's embrace of the darker undercurrents feels pitch-perfect—a timely reminder of just how oddly compelling it is to watch beautiful, dysfunctional people—from a safe distance.

SIMON DUMENCO

Roll Over, Warren Beatty

And tell Donald Trump the news. When he's not playing people's living rooms, Smithereens singer Pat DiNizio wants to rock the vote.

'A LOT OF PEOPLE FROM THE WORLDS OF entertainment and show business have made highly successful transitions to public office," says Pat DiNizio, the lead singer of the Smithereens. "Fred Grandy was an actor on *The Love Boat,* and *he* became a beloved congressman." DiNizio, who's running for a New Jersey seat in the U.S. Senate, hardly has the stature of an Aaron Spelling star—his power-pop band scored its last Top 40 hit, "Too Much Passion," in 1991. But he's already mounting a punk-rock-populist version of the Straight Talk Express, in the form of a nationwide "living-room tour" of solo concerts in fans' homes.

After considering an independent bid to replace the retiring Frank Lautenberg, DiNizio, who grew up in Plainfield and still lives in nearby Scotch Plains, decided last year to run on the Reform Party ticket. He's certainly embraced its agenda. "I don't want to get specifically into too many of the issues," he says. "But something has got to change. I'm doing this for my daughter: I cannot abide a society where first-graders are shooting each other in school."

Like his party colleagues, DiNizio is committed to campaign-finance reform, and he cites Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura as an inspiration. "If you look behind the swagger," insists DiNizio, "he has some interesting things to say." Unlike Ventura, DiNizio held office before joining the Reform Party. "When I was 18, I was a Republican Party committeeman, but I accomplished nothing," he recalls with a level of candor a consultant would consider ill-advised. To bolster his anti-Establishment cred, he recently expunged all references to the two-term stint from DiNizio2000.org (the Website's sections are still named after Smithereens songs).

DiNizio will face stiff competition in November: Former governor Jim Florio and financier Jon Corzine are competing for the Democratic nomination, and four Republicans have already declared. Still, New Jersey Reform chairman Ira Goodman thinks he's the man for the job. "We like people who are regular, everyday, ordinary citizens," he says. Despite his rock-star past, Goodman says, "he's contributing to society. He pays taxes. He's got a job."

DiNizio, who will interrupt his tour for occasional rallies–cum–club gigs in Jersey, deflects speculation that what he's really campaigning for is publicity. For one thing, he says, he's hired veteran Ohio pollster Vic Rubenstein as campaign manager. For another, he has relevant experience. "Very few people know what it's like to be onstage in front of 10,000 people who want to tear your clothes off—I've been at that point a few times," he says, with a politician's flair for overstatement. "I've already known power. I've already been rich. It's not about any of that stuff.

"Someone sent me an e-mail that said, 'Don't you think you should have run for mayor first, or dogcatcher?' " he says. "But if I spent twelve years working my way up the ladder, that would make me part of the problem, not part of the solution."

ETHAN SMITH

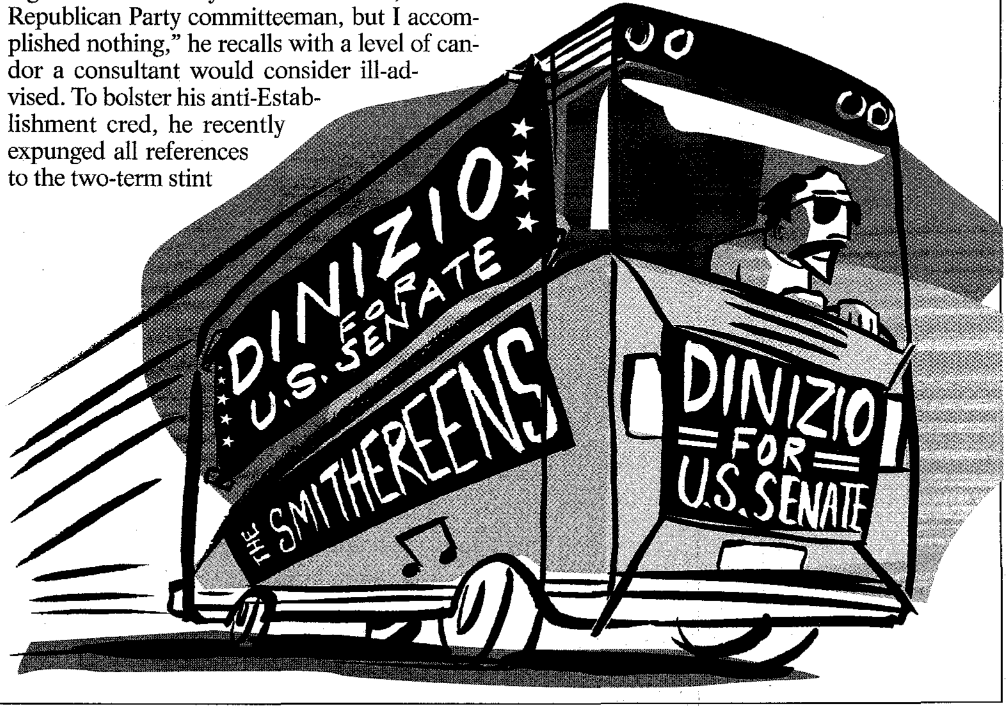
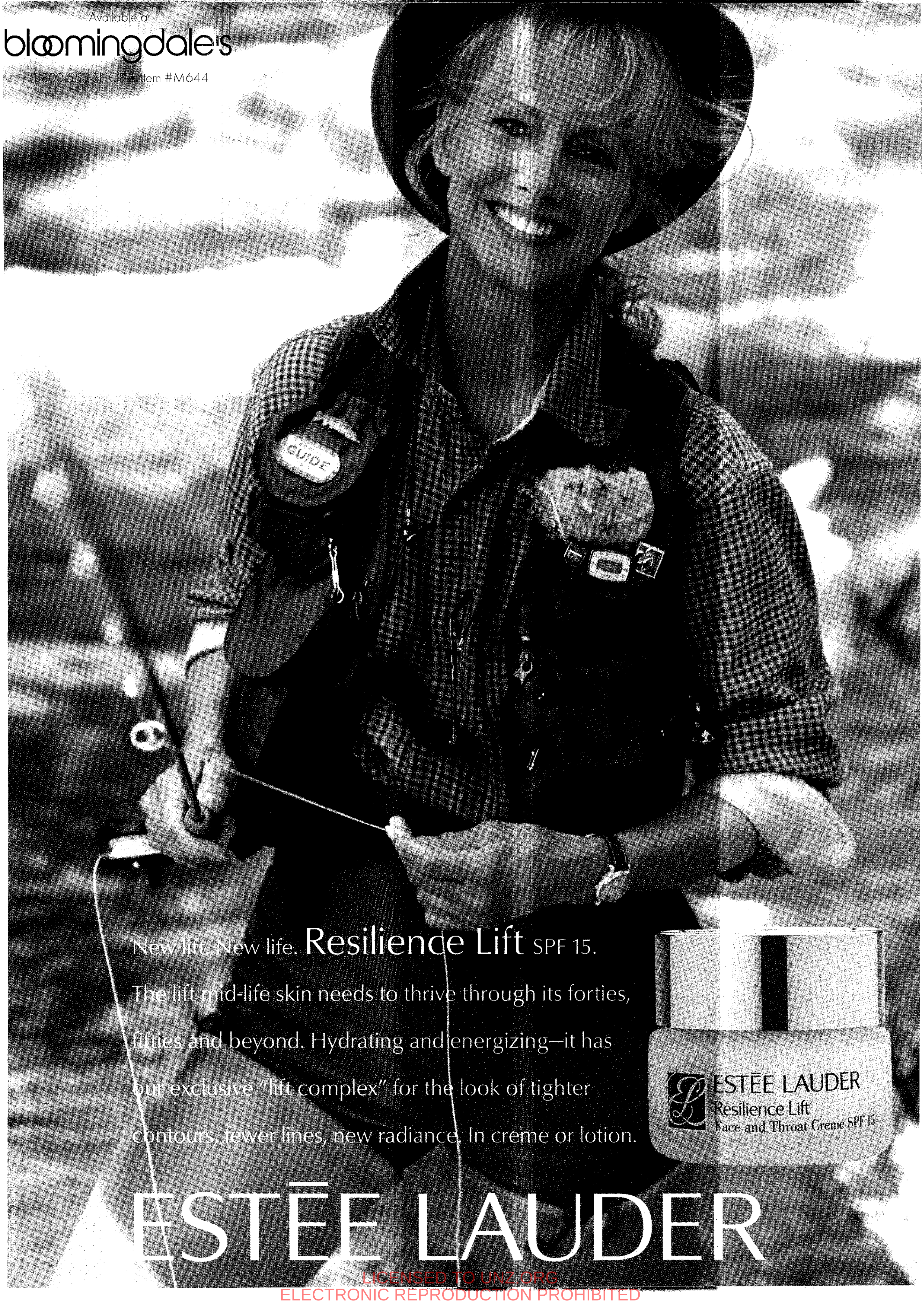


Illustration by Tom Bachtell.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THE SCENE

Stars Align

Photographs by Patrick McMullan

BILL MAHER HAD A PRIME BARSTOOL PERCH FOR WATCHING THE arrivals at *Vanity Fair's* annual post-Oscar fête at Mortons on March 26, and he was networking the hell out of his position. "I know you're a quiet, shy girl," he said to Cameron Diaz, trying to persuade her to appear on *Politically Incorrect.* "But I hear you've got strong opinions." Diaz, however, was more intrigued by another guest's beaded Union Jack miniskirt: "Where did you get that?" she squealed. "Where's Tom?" asked a friend as Nicole Kidman arrived. "He's supposed to be behind me somewhere," she sighed. Chad Lowe, on the other hand, never trailed more than a foot behind his wife, Hilary Swank. Angelina Jolie entered with her beloved brother but spent much of the night chatting with Keanu Reeves. Rod Stewart once again escorted his daughter Kimberly, who this year was blonder, older, and easily mistaken for the rocker's new squeeze: "Everyone asks me if I'm my dad's new girlfriend. I guess I could do worse." Arriving with on-again-off-again paramour Ben Affleck, Gwyneth Paltrow made a pit stop for rather friendly conversation with former flame Guy Oseary. When someone wanted to take a photo of her with Affleck, she declined, leaving Affleck to mutter: "See what I have to put up with?" BETH LANDMAN KEIL

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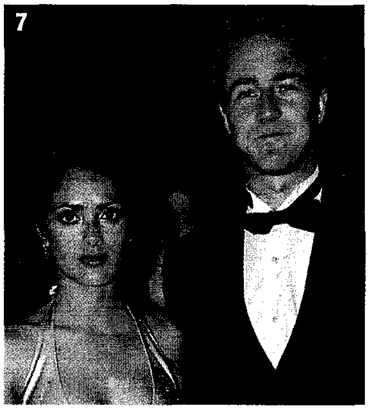

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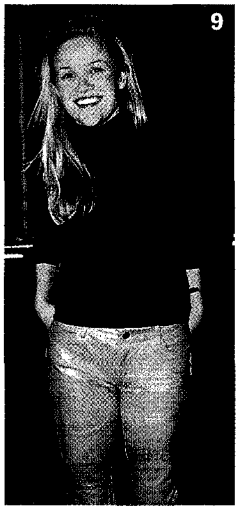

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1. Ben Affleck, Kate Hudson, and Adrien Brody at *Vanity Fair's* post-Oscar party at Mortons. 2. Vin Diesel at the Iam.com party at Quixote Studios in West Hollywood. 3. Tracee Ross at *Allure's* pre-Oscar party at Indochine in Beverly Hills. 4. Judi Dench at the DreamWorks post-Oscar party at Spago. 5. Cameron Diaz, Scott Woodward, and Farrah Fawcett at the Santa Monica piers for the Independent Spirits Awards. 6. Daryl Hannah, Griffin Dunne, and Sophie Dahl at the USA Films pre-Oscar party at Blue restaurant. 7. Salma Hayek and Edward Norton at Mortons. 8. Elton John, Donatella Versace, and Elizabeth Taylor at the surprise birthday party for John thrown by *Interview* and Donatella at the Chateau Marmont. 9. Reese Witherspoon at *Entertainment Weekly's* tenth-anniversary party at the Barker Hangar at the Santa Monica Airport.

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GOTHAMSTYLE

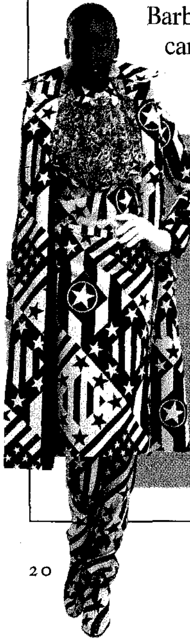
Sitting Pretty

Don't settle into the sleek leather seat of your Barcelona chair too quickly—fashion's preferred seating is moving from mid-century modern to Dr. Seuss silly. Italian designer Patty Shelabarger, whose colorful Chinese-silk slip dresses and embroidered Indian capri pants are favored by Jennifer Lopez and Charlize Theron, has created a fanciful line of limited-edition chairs and benches made from the same fabrics used for her clothing line, with plenty of velvet cushioning and floral appliqués. Madonna bought the first three chairs, as well as miniature replicas for little Lourdes. "The chairs are very *Alice in Wonderland,*" says Beth Shepherd of Kirna Zabête, where the collection is sold. But at these adult prices ($2,000–$2,700 apiece), most parents will ban their use for afternoon tea parties. MAURA EGAN

COACH
COACH

Brand Names

As the handbag continues to be every couture house's A-list accessory, designers are seeking comparable Hollywood talent to endorse the status sacks. And with the Jackie O.–inspired shoulder bag making millions for Gucci and Hermès's Grace Kelly bag a perennial classic, that means starlets with the requisite Park Avenue look: Gwyneth Paltrow is starring in a print campaign for Christian Dior's Perle City bag, and Mena Suvari and Julianne Moore pose like Georgica housewives in new print ads for Coach's Hamptons collection, a line of pastel and paisley canvas bags. "These actresses are so stylish, and they cross the boundaries of society," says Barbara Dente of the Dente & Cristina ad agency. "If you can afford it in the budget, it's worth it." M.E.



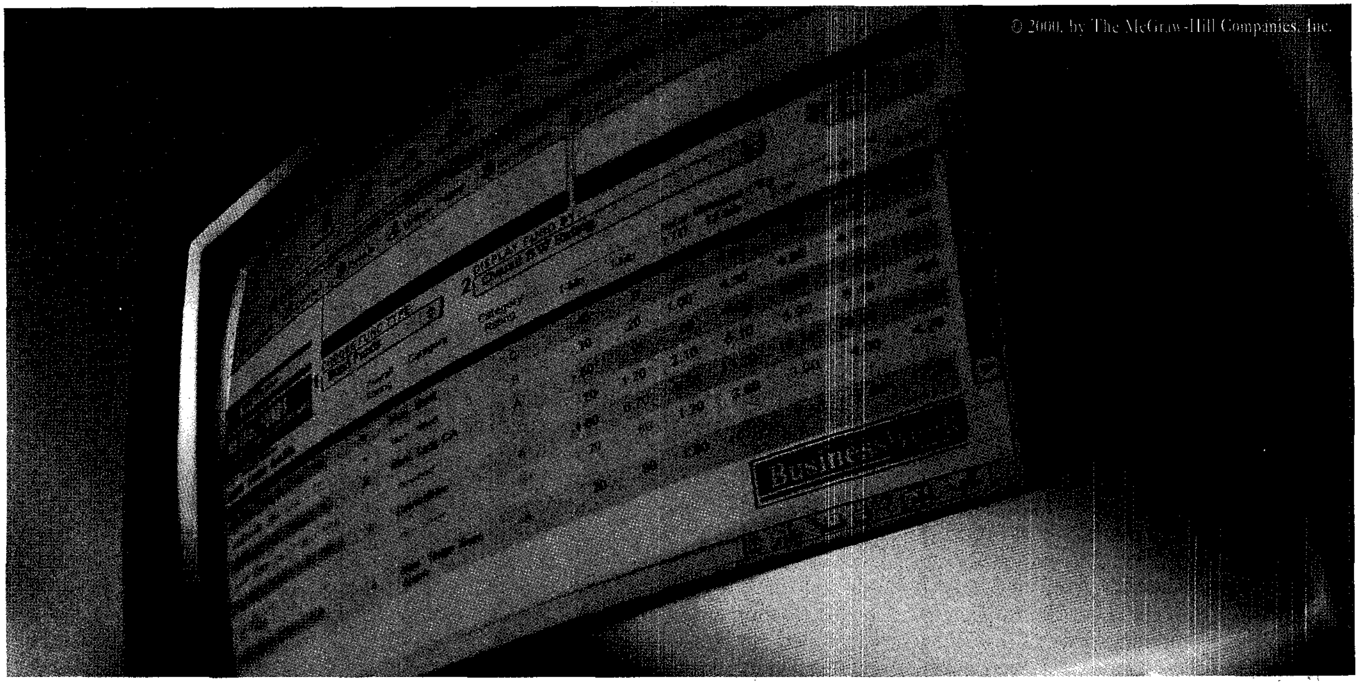
An American in Paris

Madonna isn't the only singer to have recently covered Don McLean's "American Pie." Dutch-born singer Saskia gave an acoustic rendition at Dutch duo Viktor & Rolf's first ready-to-wear show in Paris. It's not the first time Viktor Horsting and Rolf Snoeren have employed novel concepts to hype their collections (which, until now, were never available for sale): They've created their own scent, compiled art monographs about their work, and dressed model Maggie Rizer in nine outfits . . . simultaneously. Barneys will carry their beautifully cut tuxedos and indigo denims later this year—along with ruffled shirts and pantsuits splashed with the Stars and Stripes. MARK HOLGATE

TEST DRIVE

"Nice purse," a friend says with a smirk as I arrive at *Manhattan File*'s party at Henri Bendel with this little leather Prada number ($610, modeled at left) on my shoulder. Even though every designer from Gucci to Matt Nye is introducing a tiny version of the man-bag for fall, and guys were toting them at the Milan shows, I was skeptical. But most people at the party don't say anything, and before long I start to forget I've got this dainty device hanging from my body. Then I catch a girl eyeing my bag. "What are *you* doing with that?" she asks, then cries, "I want it!" Another woman lifts a cigarette to her lips and asks, "Do you have a light in your pocketbook?" I do, but that's about all—the thing barely snaps shut holding two packs of Marlboro reds and a cell phone. Aside from its sassy look, it's pretty useless. But somehow I've grown attached to it, and after five whiskeys, when it disappears into some sofa cushions, I find myself shouting, "Which one of you bastards took my purse?" IAN SPIEGELMAN

Photographs: clockwise from top right, Dasha Wright Ewing; Emily Shur; Anuschka Blommers & Niels Schumm



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THE BOTTOM LINE JAMES J. CRAMER

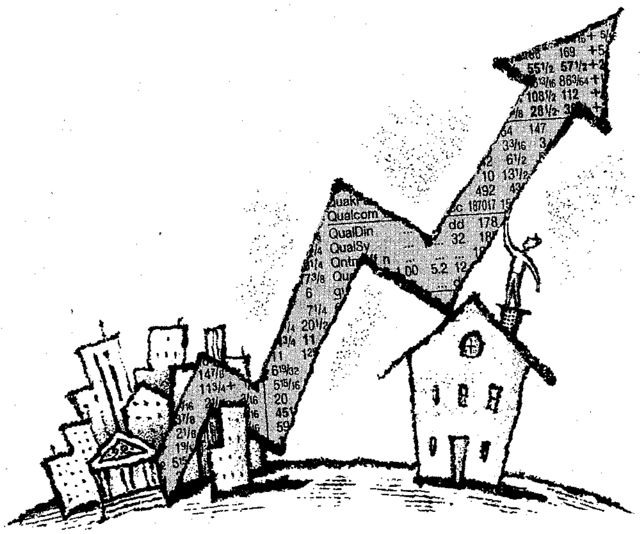
Power to the People

Wall Street used to be ruled by a few despotic, slow-moving institutional giants. Now the market is driven by millions of miniature Jim Cramers. Are we happy about that?

FOUR YEARS AGO, WHEN I DEPARTed this column for cyber pastures, the mutual funds of America were ascendant. The kingpins at Fidelity and Janus and Alliance served as agents of triage, deciding which industries would grow and which would die. They liked consistent growth, no surprises, and management that knew the game: underpromise and overdeliver. They built portfolios of health care, pharmaceuticals, consumer staples, high-growth retail, and, of course, technology. They bought giant blocks of all these stocks in their daily battles to stay with the S&P 500, the benchmark their bosses told them to beat or risk losing their assets or their jobs. As long as the companies "beat expectations"—even though they'd put out intentionally lowball numbers to begin with—they all made out like bandits.

My, how things have changed. The kingpins are no longer at the mutual funds. Sure, those funds still get billions over the transom, but they aren't the marginal buyers setting the prices for securities anymore. The kingpins are ourselves. Individuals—trading through online brokers at a fraction of what they used to pay—now determine which companies grow to the sky and which ones are worthless and despised and sold with abandon. The individual Do-It-Yourselfer's benchmark is no longer the S&P, that arcane collection of bowwows crafted by the green eyeshades over at McGraw-Hill. Indie investors don't care for companies with consistent but staid growth. They like their growth to be organic and viral, and the new performance standard is Yahoo! or JDSUniphase or Brocade, to name three companies that barely existed the last time I was in these pages but are now valued in the multiple billions. The individual doesn't want to make 8 percent per year, the goal when I sold stocks at Goldman Sachs in the eighties, or 20 percent, as has been the case since I started my hedge fund a dozen years ago, but *1,000* percent, because that's what you would have made if you just owned Cisco or Qualcomm or Intel, and *everybody* seems to own those kinds of stocks.

In the "old" days, the public wanted to entrust its money to the sage graybeards who toiled studiously over the numbers and decided that Procter & Gamble might be good to own for the next ten years. Now people want to be . . . me! They want to swing back and forth on stocks, trade for ten points a day, and outdraw the hedge funds at their own game. They want to be swashbuckling masters of their own trading universe.



Who can blame them? Those who "believe" have done so much better than those who have doubts or are cautious or express the need for a rigorous model of earnings before plunging in. The notions of dear and cheap now yield the wrong conclusions. Only the most expensive stocks go up, and the cheapest wallow in the portfolios of the dreaded value managers who seem defrocked by the whole Net experience. Only the most reckless in their pursuit of growth at any price boast phenomenal returns. *Prudence* and *discipline* have become the two most dangerous words in the financial lexicon.

And I love it that way. It strips the whole process of capital formation to its most naked and high-speed essence, giving market capitalizations of billions of dollars not to the most conservative and buttoned-up companies—the ones that worry about missing earnings by a millicent—but to those that are pursuing massive growth and dominance. Only a people's army of individual investors would allow Jeff Bezos to spend billions of dollars developing a worldwide department store. Institutions would never be so generous, or so patient. Only individuals would see the long-term potential for wireless or the Net. The institutions would be too worried it might not come through in the next quarter and could blow them out of the Morningstar rankings. Their cautious and narrow approach put them in "predictable" growth stocks, like Coke and Philip Morris, which turned out to be anything but.

Sure, the DIYers get carried away. The desire to find a penny stock that can go to $80 because Cisco once traded at 6 cents blinds them. (It never *really* traded at 6 cents; that was split-adjusted. It came public at $18.) Often, the need to find the *next* Microsoft has people cashiering their Microsoft for something on the come that might never deliver as much as Messrs. Gates and Ballmer have put on the table. Nevertheless, the excesses have been washed away by the successes.

The Old Guard guys are aghast at the changes. They curse the individual as

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they stare at their screens jam-packed with the Gillettes and the Dials and the Bristol-Myerses, the stocks that now go nowhere. They can't believe they have to sell their Coke or their Pepsi for Extreme Networks or DoubleClick. Who can value those contradictions?

But as a paid-up minister of the church of what's happening now, I couldn't be happier. I never thought this business had much rigor to it. Strip away all of the price-to-book and price-to-earnings and return-on-investment mumbo jumbo, and what you get is supply and demand. Right now there aren't enough tech stocks, despite the phenomenal speed with which the Goldmans and Morgans create them, and there are too many stocks that represent claims on the old economy. Until there are too many techs, we will keep creating overnight fortunes for all of those swift enough to get in (and maybe get out).

I relish the individual's ascendancy and enjoy the competition and the camaraderie of a stock-crazed public. I've been crazy about the stock market since second grade! In fact, one of the reasons I came back to *New York* is that this trend of individual over institution is still in its infancy. I fully expect more of you will be reading this column with each passing milestone in the market. Sure, we will still have our cultural and political and sports heroes. But how much money have they put in your pockets? I'll take Cisco's John Chambers over New York's Rudy Giuliani any day. My daily sport has become your avocation, and that makes my day.

Can it come to an end? Will there come a dip that can't be bought? Will there be a moment when the amateurs get their comeuppance? Sure. But we've heard that siren for a dozen years. My goal is not to pass judgment on the wacky valuations and strange price swings; it's to generate gains and minimize losses. In this column, I will try to make sense of my day job so you can have a more visceral and, I hope, more profitable time enjoying our new American pastime. ▬

James J. Cramer is manager of a hedge fund and cofounder of TheStreet.com. At time of publication, his fund had positions in Brocade, Cisco, Goldman Sachs, Intel, JDS Uniphase, Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Qualcomm, and Yahoo! His fund often buys and sells securities that are the subject of his columns, both before and after the columns are published, and the positions that his fund takes may change at any time. Under no circumstances does the information in this column represent a recommendation to buy or sell stocks. Cramer's writings provide insights into the dynamics of money management and are not a solicitation for transactions. While he cannot provide investment advice or recommendations, he invites comments at jjcletters@thestreet.com.

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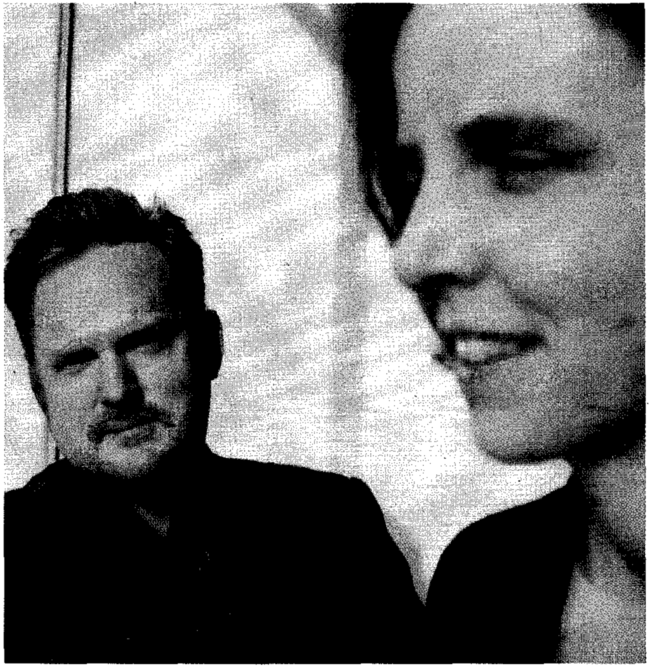
MEDIA MICHAEL WOLFF

Yin Eats Yang

With PlanetOut's purchase of 'Out' and 'The Advocate,' Tom Rielly, its chief homosexual officer, has finally unified gay media's divided soul.

I HAPPEN TO HAVE HAD A GOOD SEAT on the sidelines of some media plays that culminated last week in the latest acquisition of old media by new. Herewith is my report on the winners and losers, lessons and ironies.

Michael Goff, the founder of *Out,* which was among the publications acquired by the Internet start-up PlanetOut in its sweeping roll-up of almost the entirety of gay media, had an office next to mine in a loft on 14th Street where we traded media gossip. He was my first introduction—this was in the early nineties—to that new breed of business-plan-writing young people capable of reducing almost everything to a compelling marketing formulation. In the instance of *Out* (*I* suggested *Out;* Goff wanted to call it *Rogue*), he insisted, and kept insisting with irresistible forcefulness, that gays represented an easy-to-target high-disposable-income demographic group and hence a perfect category for an affluent-lifestyle magazine. (It was either Goff's consummate business persona or my perpetual cluelessness that kept me from realizing for quite a while that Goff himself was gay.)



Out and about: Tom Rielly and Megan Smith.

His point was that gay people lead an economic life as well as a sexual life, and that buying power is a much sexier attribute than sexuality. (He believed, on this basis, that you could combine gay men with lesbians and no one would be the wiser.) Goff disparaged *The Advocate,* also acquired last week by PlanetOut, as ghetto media without access to broad national consumer advertising. (The conventional wisdom was that *The Advocate* was old media to *Out*'s new version of gay media, and that it would shortly fold—in fact, it thrived.)

Goff's *Out,* which launched in 1992 to enormous publicity and with numerous big-brand advertisers making their first direct pitches to the gay market, was meant to take gayness totally mainstream. David Geffen, Calvin Klein, Ross Bleckner were Goff's model readers (the biker dykes and gay accountants weren't whom he had in mind). *Out* was a variation on *Details,* or *Esquire,* or *GQ.* It consciously, even militantly, banned anything tawdry or downmarket—including advertising of a sexual, or even suggestive, nature (you couldn't say "shit" in *Out*).

It wasn't that long after the launch of *Out* that, in the new Internet world just beginning, I met Tom Rielly, who was running a group called Digital Queers that helped gay organizations get wired (or even just get computers). I doubt if either Rielly or Goff was yet thinking in terms of yin of new and yang of old media, but they were certainly complementary, contrary figures. Goff would have been an ideal executive in any media enterprise—he was a remarkable schmoozer—whereas Rielly might not have been employable in any other media world outside the early Web. Where Goff is tall, Armani-resplendent, controlled, Rielly is sort of a roly-poly mess, somewhere between dishevelment and flamboyance. Conversationally, Goff is precise, competitive, litigator-like, while Rielly is always in the middle of indiscriminate utterances, or on the verge of tears or mawkish intensity. They were a remarkably vivid head-and-heart dichotomy.

Goff's perfectly logical idea, in mid-1995, was that Rielly—"nerd boy"—should come and work for Goff and run an adjunct Website for the magazine. But Rielly procrastinated and failed to return Goff's phone calls and screwed up the opportunity (Rielly's idea of negotiating is to drop out of sight). "A flake," Goff pronounced, and launched out.com, largely a promotional affair for the magazine, without Rielly.

GOFF WAS OPENLY SCORNFUL OF online stuff anyway—"I've been on AOL," he would say with mighty contempt—and his intention, like that of most serious magazine publishers, was to make only a minimal Web investment. After all, the online world was exactly what he was against in gay media—the sexuality, the backroom quality, the secrecy. The online gay world embarrassed him.

On the other hand, anonymity, eroticism, safe sex, and the easy ability to chat with like-minded souls was available for $3.50 an hour on AOL, and by 1995, the gay-and-lesbian forum was one of its most trafficked areas. The Internet was some risk-free Bloom-in-Nighttown place—sex was defining interactivity.

Ted Leonsis, the key executive in AOL's move to become a new sort of media company, made Rielly's plan to create a gay-focused online company one of the first of AOL's Greenhouse investments. Not long afterward, Sequoia Capital, the venture-capital firm that funded Yahoo!,

Photograph by William Mercer McLeod.

agreed to invest, too, and Rielly launched PlanetOut.

Goff had his lawyers shoot off a cease-and-desist letter—which Rielly ignored ("Just so Michael," he said and shrugged).

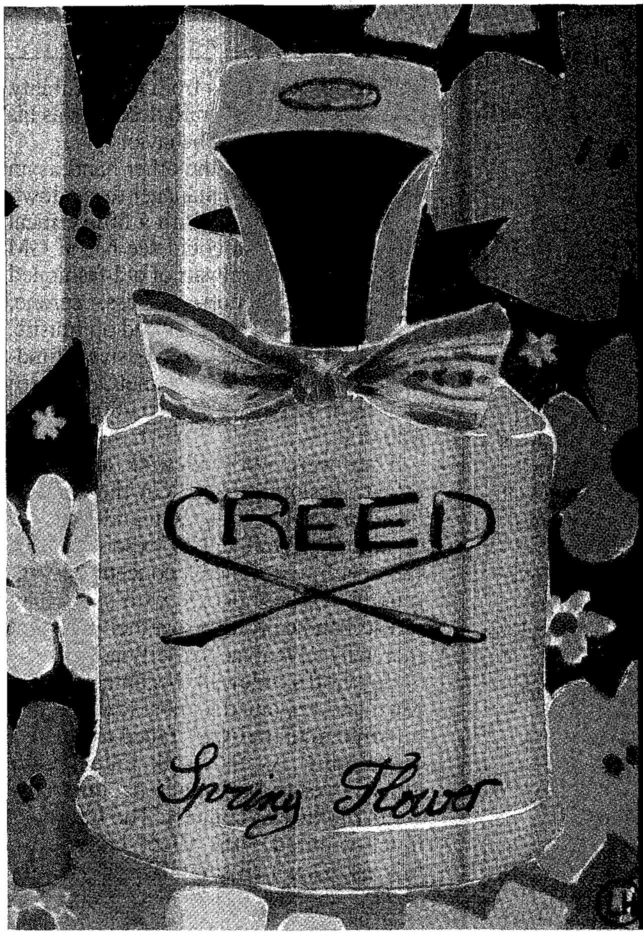
But Goff was hardly worried. Goff envisioned a different kind of expansion of gay media—gay catalogues, gay resorts, gay casinos. Indeed, he saw *Out*'s franchise as a play much more for affluent dollars than for gay ones. Such ambitions, however, shortly led him into a conflict with his primary investor, Bob Hardman, whose initial $500,000 investment was on its way to ballooning to $8 million and who saw no end in sight for *Out*'s losses. Goff, who'd lined up a direct-marketing company to buy out Hardman, threatened to quit if Hardman wouldn't sell. "You don't have a magazine without me," Goff pronounced (in the immortal words of all magazine founders). Unexpectedly, Hardman accepted Goff's resignation (though, in a double reversal, Goff negotiated the terms of his resignation in such a way that he held substantial rights over the direction of the company).

Goff's decision, in the fall of 1996, to take a job at Microsoft running its city-site project, Sidewalk (while Goff is someone who would never be too early to a trend, he'd never be too late, either), was one of those portentous signals and much-discussed career moves suggesting big changes in the way people thought about their media careers.

Rielly, on the other hand, became the bane of his venture-capital backers. "They said I was flaky and unreliable, which I am, but they knew that going in," Rielly sniffs. Rielly was saved at the precipice only because Leonsis and AOL continued to support him and because PlanetOut had enough cash in the bank to buy out the Sequoia group. That left Rielly, however, with only $400,000 on hand and a monthly burn rate of $225,000.

Rielly was tanking while Goff, at 30, with a natural Microsoft arrogance and aggressiveness, was quickly becoming one of Bill Gates's key advisers on media matters. Sidewalk, Goff's maiden Web effort, was the most ambitious launch to date in the history of the Internet.

RIELLY, MEANWHILE, TRADED IN HIS CHIEF-executive title for a new role, which he dubbed "chief homosexual officer," and appointed Megan Smith, a 33-year-old engineer, to replace him as PlanetOut's CEO. There's a theory—let's call it the Steve Case theory—that says the most important thing a manager can do is opt out of management. Again, Goff and Rielly represent divergent poles—Goff is a con-



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trol freak; Rielly runs from responsibility, a condition Megan Smith describes as his "checking-in-and-out behavior."

Smith herself, on the other hand, is an almost fifties sort of manager (even down to the name Smith). With a little critical interpretation, you could see her at GM or P&G. She's a stalwart of old-fashioned company dedication—selfless, serene, and preternaturally sunny and optimistic.

As Goff launched the massively funded Sidewalk, Smith cut PlanetOut's burn rate from $225,000 to $40,000, then to $20,000.

They were not, Sidewalk and PlanetOut, dissimilar ideas. On the basis of his experience with *Out* and the gay community, Goff talked expertly about the new Internet-media concept of community—of how people with similar interests can be brought together in a commercially advantageous setting.

But Goff's Sidewalk began as a ghost town and remained a ghost town. A few hundred million dollars failed to create a community. As Sidewalk failed, Goff moved over to MSN and encountered a similar failure to connect. The Internet's much-vaunted viral effect became on Microsoft's watch something of an antibody problem.

In early 1997, *Out* closed its Website and made a deal to funnel its remaining traffic to PlanetOut. Smith identifies this 25 percent increase in its traffic as the critical viral moment for PlanetOut—from this point, traffic grew exponentially. The natural limit on a gay magazine—that a large part of the universe of readers of gay magazines don't want to be associated with a gay magazine—disappears online, the perfect furtive medium.

It is obviously important not to make too much of the irony that the consummate polished marketing guy failed while the misfit clown succeeded. There are, of course, perfectly awful marketing assholes making billions all the time, and clownish screwup behavior is almost invariably and severely penalized.

Still, there's a point here.

Henry Scott, a former executive at the New York *Times* who took over *Out* after Goff left, describes *Out* as having a consistent soul problem: "This is partly Michael's legacy, but I am to blame, too. The point is that neither of us was particularly interested in gay media—wouldn't be caught dead reading gay magazines."

In the old-media paradigm, the media is about power, authority, legitimacy. The operative goal of Goff's *Out* magazine was to take gay interests and sensibilities and join them to some hip, moneyed mainstream. (The idea at Sidewalk, too, was that it would, in one fell swoop, wow the world.)

I don't think this is what new media does, or is capable of doing. New media is less symbolic, less evocative, less about making any specific kind of point. It's much more small-time. There is nothing particularly slick about PlanetOut. It feels efficient, local, unassuming. And authentic: Real gay people probably want to know real gay people rather than the *Will & Grace* type. When Rielly talks about PlanetOut, he invariably relates it to his identity search—his first gay chat room in 1984 on CompuServe, the BBS services he frequented, the fidonet echoes, the Usenet newsgroups, and the Web. Boy-meets-boy, at its most efficient, is an unromanticized function.

Old media is about illusion. New media is about practicalities (a.k.a. the user experience).

> *"There is nothing slick about PlanetOut. It feels efficient, local, unassuming. And authentic:* **Real gay people probably want to know real gay people."**

AFTER BLOCKING VARIOUS PROPOSALS TO sell *Out*, which, operating near a financial break-even point, had been unable to build its circulation or advertising base, Goff gave up his hold on the magazine in December.

PlanetOut, with new money from Internet notables like Nicholas Negroponte and Rob Glazer, additional capital from America Online, and a new venture round from the Mayfield Fund, began to negotiate the acquisition of *Out* and *The Advocate* and assorted smaller gay publications, for $30 million worth of its several-hundred-million-dollar pre-IPO valued stock, betting that it could convert its much larger online user base into magazine readers.

In due course, PlanetOut will be the first gay-oriented public company, an idea that does not now seem particularly surprising. And, of course, Tom Rielly will be wonderfully wealthy.

As for Michael Goff, well, he's become a venture capitalist. ■

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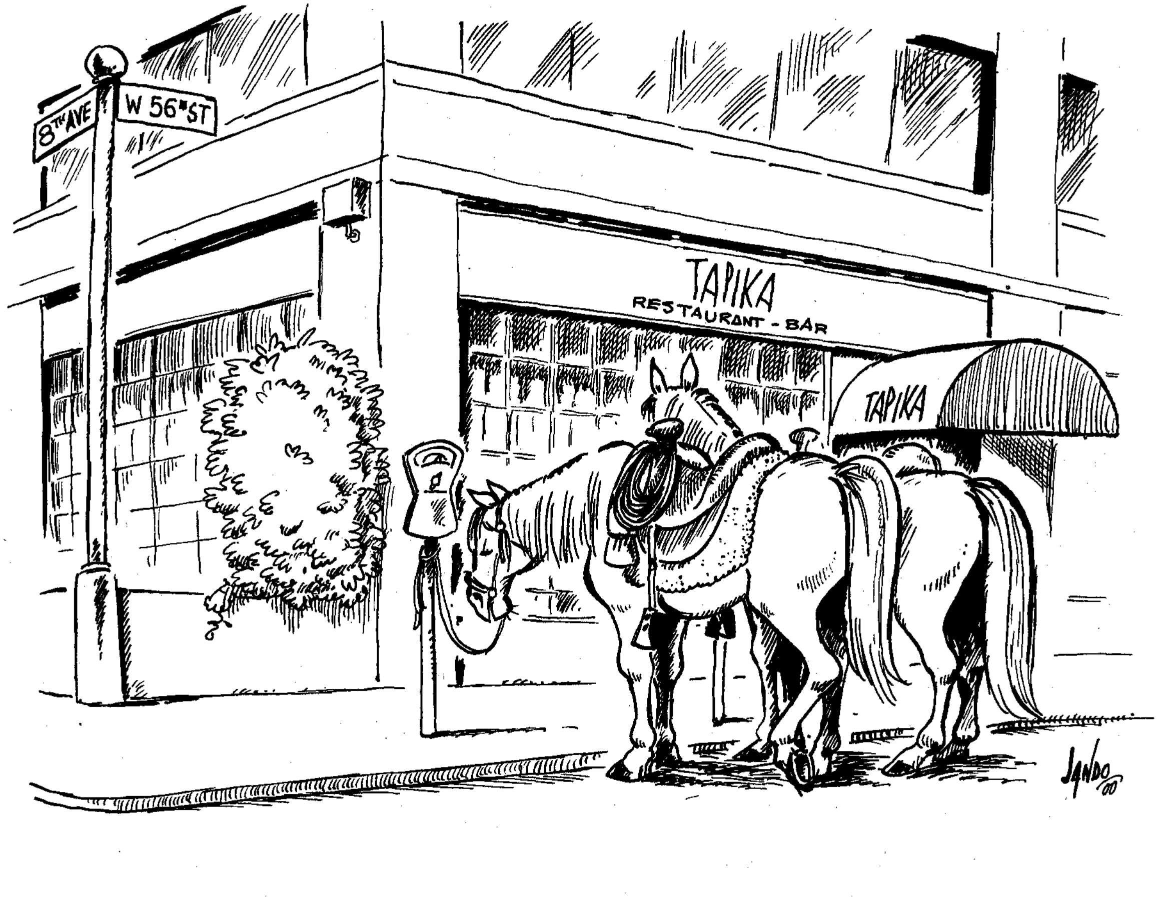
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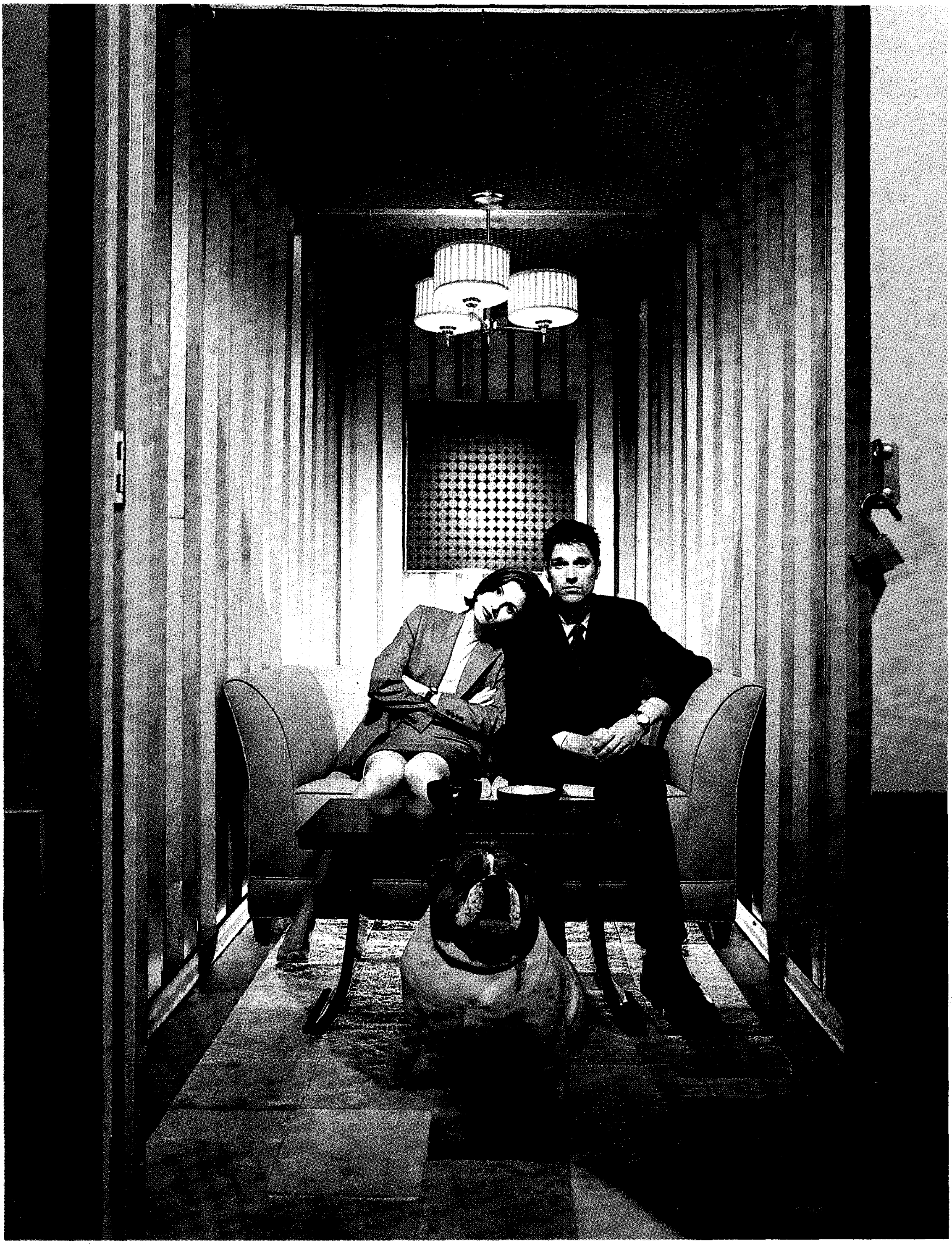

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANDREW BRUSSO

BUBBLE JEOPARDY

The battles are fast and bloody, the prices mind-blowing, and bad behavior rules as everyone tries to snatch that last hunk of property away from his neighbor.

BY CARL SWANSON

WHEN TROUBLED BANKING HEIR WOODY Woodward, in despair over his failed marriage, jumped out the kitchen window of his fourteenth-floor, 3,500-square-foot prewar co-op at 141 East 72nd Street, many saw it as the tragic dénouement of one of New York's longest-running tabloid dramas. Woodward's mother had shot his father in 1955, an event Dominick Dunne fictionalized in *The Two Mrs. Grenvilles.* The city's real-estate brokers, on the other hand, saw it as a plum listing—the kind of apartment that doesn't drop into the market very often. In the week following Woodward's death, dozens of them pitched his estate, hoping to sell the apartment. With his heirs and the attorneys for the estate clashing over who should handle it, the competition was intense. (Sharon Baum, star broker at the Corcoran Group, was awarded the listing, which sold earlier this year for about $3.9 million.)

THE NEW YORK REAL-ESTATE BOOM IS FIVE years old now, and it's pretty much incinerated everything in its path. Apartments on the block for years are suddenly selling, people dead-set on getting the prices they paid at the top of the last market have turned heady profits, and vast swaths of downtown have been gutted and stuffed with lofts. Neighborhoods uptown and in Brooklyn that were built in some bygone era's real-estate bubble are suddenly *haut bourgeois* again.

Still they keep coming: the two-career Wall Street families, dot-com instant winners, suburban refugees, people with five-digit jobs looking to not pay thousands a month to a landlord and have nothing to show for it. There's more money than space, so the space is getting more expensive, and the battles for it fast and bloody.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Housing Vacancy Survey, done every three years, there were nearly 30 percent fewer apartments for sale citywide last year than in 1996, and 21 percent fewer apartments available for rent. The competition to win the "exclusive"—be the sole broker who markets the place—points to the fact that there's simply not that much inventory.

"If you get an exclusive, it's going to sell," says Michele Kleier, president of Gumley Haft Kleier. "But that doesn't make this a market you love working in. It's nice to be able to have something that your customer says, 'Oh, I'm thrilled' in getting, rather than 'I can't afford better.' "

But there's not much she can do about that. After a five-year climb in real-estate prices, even swooping discord between the Dow and NASDAQ of late doesn't seem to be slowing down the relentless pace—or the savagery of the process.

"A year or so ago, stock-market ups and downs mattered," says Kirk Henckels, head of Stribling Private Brokerage. But people no longer think the sky is falling when tech has a bad week: "Neither interest rates nor stock-market fluctuations have had much impact on the psychology of this market."

And that's what's making things ugly.

"SELLERS OR BUYERS, THEY'RE ALL MISBEHAVING," says the head of one brokerage. "They send out contracts to two or three buyers, get them all signed, and pick whichever one's higher or comes in first. It's like the Wild West. Nobody's word means anything anymore."

"It's a war zone among buyers in certain neighborhoods," says Bruce Ehrmann, a doughboy for Stribling, Wells & Gay in TriBeCa. "It's extremely difficult for brokers. Because the normal means of handling a transaction sanely are almost useless in this kind of market.

"What do you do when, one day, you have a bid at full asking—which in almost any other market meant you had a deal. You shake hands. And the next day someone else waltzes in and blithely offers $300,000 more. There's very little way to honorably handle that."

Supply is so picked through that many brokerages try to keep new listings to themselves. That way, when they find a buyer—and most of the time, they can—they don't have to split the commission.

This can mean not answering calls from other brokers to see the place. "I'll have a really good listing, and suddenly, when they call me, I'm never in," says the head

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of one brokerage, referring, naturally, to the bad habits of his competitors. "Or, I never send the listing out. Sometimes I don't even tell people in my own store. The scariest is when I don't even advertise it. Instead, I advertise a comparable property that sold maybe two years ago and when brokers call to get their client in, I say, 'It's sold, sorry.' If a customer calls, I try to convert them to the real property."

"Sometimes, when a broker loses an apartment, the broker does whatever they can to get the person you brought in turned down by the board. They'll send unflattering things from the newspaper to the board anonymously, call attention to things that the board wouldn't otherwise be aware of," says one high-end broker. Another broker got a saber-rattling phone call from a bitter rival for an apartment, who threatened, "I have friends in this building. I will do whatever I can to keep these people out." Fortunately, the threatened party taped the conversation.

"I just heard this half an hour ago," says another high-end broker. "A broker who went to a funeral at St. James Church—the man who was deceased is, like, as white as you can get, Union Club, Colony Club, Blue Book—and asked the daughter of the deceased if she could have the listing for his apartment. *In the church!*"

There's Christmas-list stealing, fax-nabbing, "brokers sending letters to the entire roster at the San Remo bragging about their record sale there—which wasn't their sale," complains another broker. "People will shoot their mother for a listing."

"When I was sick, someone wanted to give me an exclusive, and another broker called them and said, 'Oh, she's close to death—why would you give her your exclusive? Better give it to me,' " a broker says.

Maybe this town isn't big enough for all of them. According to the heads of other brokerages, the two most expansionist giants in town, Douglas Elliman and Corcoran, seem to have declared war on each other.

"Barbara [Corcoran] steals so many brokers, many of them Elliman's," causing some of the tension, says a rival brokerage head. But she's also a *Fast Company*–style marketing machine in a previously quiet business. The result, says another brokerage head, is a lot of "I won't show you my apartment 'cause you didn't show me yours" going on between the two.

Competition between the megabrokerages has been squeezing the lesser players, too. "In the middle, you get killed," said Neil Binder, principal of Bellmarc. Smaller companies can be stripped of their star brokers or simply swallowed up. Some just fade away.

NOW THAT DEMAND HAS SURpassed supply, a new-economy goofiness has overtaken apartment valuations. "There are no more parameters for what people should expect to pay," says Frosty Montgomery of Corcoran. "Somebody who bought an apartment for $3 million two years ago can put it back on the market for $5 or $6 million. People come in with half a million dollars and think, 'That's a hefty sum of money. I should be able to buy a two-bedroom.' And you know what? That's like finding a needle in a haystack."

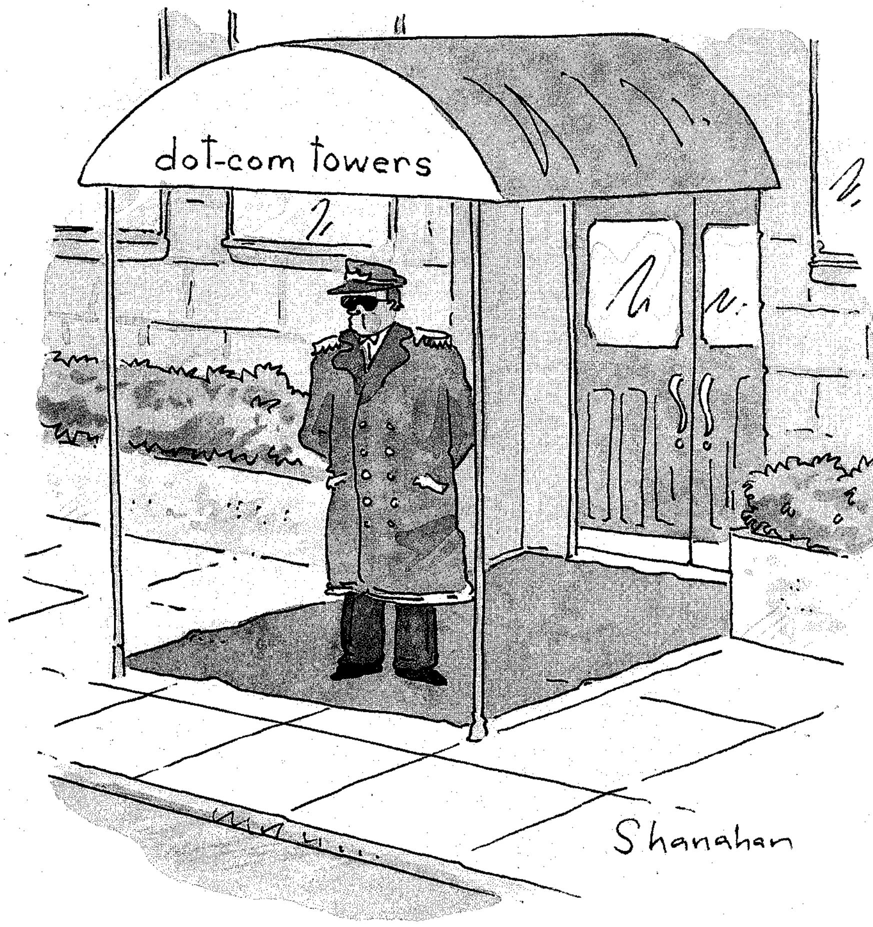
Suddenly, owners of even the most banal real estate are sweating greed as they contemplate what someone might pay. "The worse case is when the seller keeps raising the price," says Frederick Peters of Ashforth Warburg. "He wants $2.2 million and you bring him that. Only now he wants 2.5, and you have to blow off the 2.2. And then he wants 2.8. By the time you get him what he wants, he figures it's worth more now."

As the sellers play their game of price-tease, many buyers are left clutching their paper sacks of cash, not quite understanding how they can make this much money and still be unable to find a place.

"I have a nice, completely board-passable client," says Alexa Lambert of Stribling, Wells & Gay. "I just call them up to chat and ask after the kids because I have nothing to show them. Otherwise, they think you've forgotten about them." What used to pass for the Carnegie Hill middle class—professionals scraping by without Wall Street bonus bucks, "the normal people," Lambert calls them, already stretching the definition, "the people making a half a million dollars a year—they won't be able to afford to live here and put two kids in private school."

BROKERS ARE CONSTITUTIONALLY A-GO-GO, but even they are starting to get a little overwhelmed by the deal-after-deal delirium of the marketplace.

Ashforth Warburg's Richard Steinberg puts it this way: "You can't relate real-estate prices in New York to size or square



footage. You have to think of it as art." Lusting after that three-bedroom Van Gogh on Central Park West is only natural.

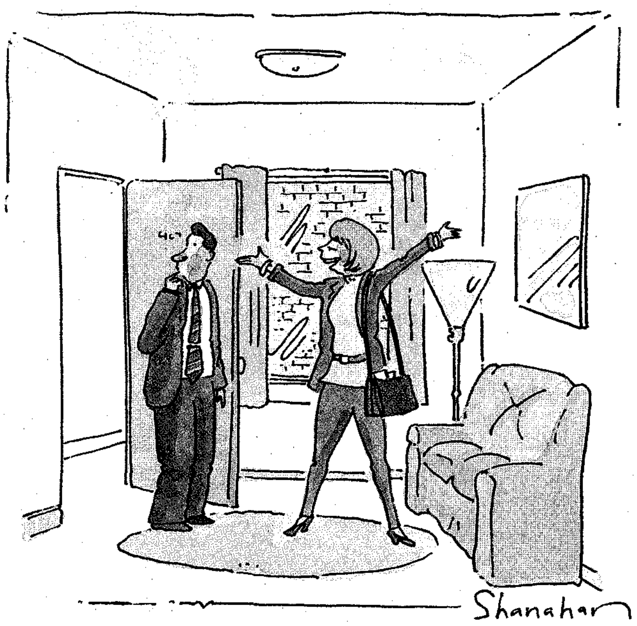
The good things that have resulted from the boom—the renovation of mediocre buildings, the cleaning up of semi-abandoned areas—are changing this into a different kind of city. "A very important thing to focus on is how much more money certain people, like securities-and-commodities brokers, have," says Larry Sicular, head of residential appraisals at Brown Harris Stevens. "They're shocked that prices have doubled in ten years but forget how much their income has gone up."

The counterargument to that counterargument, of course, is that nobody else can afford to live in Manhattan. "They're not building one-bedrooms anymore," observes Bellmarc's Lisa Strobing. Instead, everyone's building prewars all over again, with many of the new buildings—515 Park, the Empire, the Chatham, 610 Park, the Westbury—consisting almost exclusively of large apartments, two bedrooms–plus. Even as new buildings are built and opened, there are other forces nipping at the housing stock, like the trend of combining apartments and making multifamily brownstones and townhouses whole again. The new rich are hollowing out more and more of Manhattan just for themselves. "As a standard strategy, if we see a studio or one-bedroom, we knock on the neighbor's door," says Bellmarc's Binder. "A studio's worth $150,000. Combine it with a neighbor, and together, they're worth $400,000."

Gil Neary, president of DG Neary Realty, says that, in rentals, "we have a lot more people who are not sharing a bed but are sharing a one-bedroom apartment or a studio." Volume at the Gay Roommate Information Network, which he also runs, has more than doubled from two years ago.

Barbara Corcoran and other real-estate bulls have said that there's still room for prices to go up: Just compare Manhattan real-estate prices with the swank districts of Paris or London, which are pricier still.

That pretty much leaves Brooklyn. Middle-class ex-Manhattanites have reconstituted the Upper West Side along the F-train line, filling in the gaps from DUMBO through Carroll Gardens and the stinky industrial wasteland of Gowanus, on to the southern half of Park Slope and down toward Kensington. Settlement is cheek-by-jowl with public housing in Fort Greene and Clinton Hill. For grittier youngsters who work in new media, it's following the L-train four stops in, practically to Bushwick. And, of course, there's Harlem, too, which has become a buy-a-mansion empowerment zone for professional whites and blacks.



"One doesn't buy a Picasso by the square foot, darling!"

What happens to the people who used to live in those liminal areas is another matter. "In the last three years," says housing-policy researcher Victor Bach of the Community Service Society, "100,000 units went beyond $500 a month in rent." As the middle class continues its Lebensraum, "the people that are there get pressed out—in some cases harassed out—by the landlords," says Bach.

> "They now have $10 million in cash and don't know what to do with it. They're dot-commers who just went public. That's the spore that ate TriBeCa."

CLEARLY, SOMEBODY CAN AFford all this. As one disappointed buyer puts it, "If, for a million-five, *I* can't even get a decent apartment, what's happening in this city? Who's getting them?"

"I'm convinced: The higher the price, the younger the buyer," says William B. May broker Joanne Greene, fresh from selling a $4.5 million apartment at the Westbury. "You have 30-year-olds who two years ago were living in bunk beds with roomies and wearing those p.j.'s with feet sewn on. They now have $10 million in cash and don't know what to do with it," says one downtown broker. "They're dot-commers who just went public. That's exclusively who they are. That's the spore that ate TriBeCa." Brown Harris Stevens broker Elizabeth Sample attributes the run-up, in part, to these guys. "In San Francisco and Silicon Valley, real estate is going for 30 percent over ask." With droves of them now washing up in Manhattan, it's increasing valuations. "It's people like Michael Dell," she says, referring to the 35-year-old Dell Computer Corporation founder who recently spent $22 million—$4 million over asking—for a twelve-room apartment at 950 Fifth Avenue. "They negotiate differently from New Yorkers. They hit the price and go above it and sign immediately. New Yorkers, they negotiate and try to delay a week."

Just think how hard this has been on those who are rich in an old-fashioned, low-bandwidth, East Coast way. "I thought we had the money," says a young, frustrated Upper East Sider who works for a family business (her fiancé works on Wall Street). "I thought it would be easy. And we do have money, but not for this market. To decide over this weekend to be willing to go up to $1.2 million and renovate at the age we are—I mean, that's *double* the price of our parents' houses." How old are they? "In our mid-twenties.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DANNY SHANAHAN

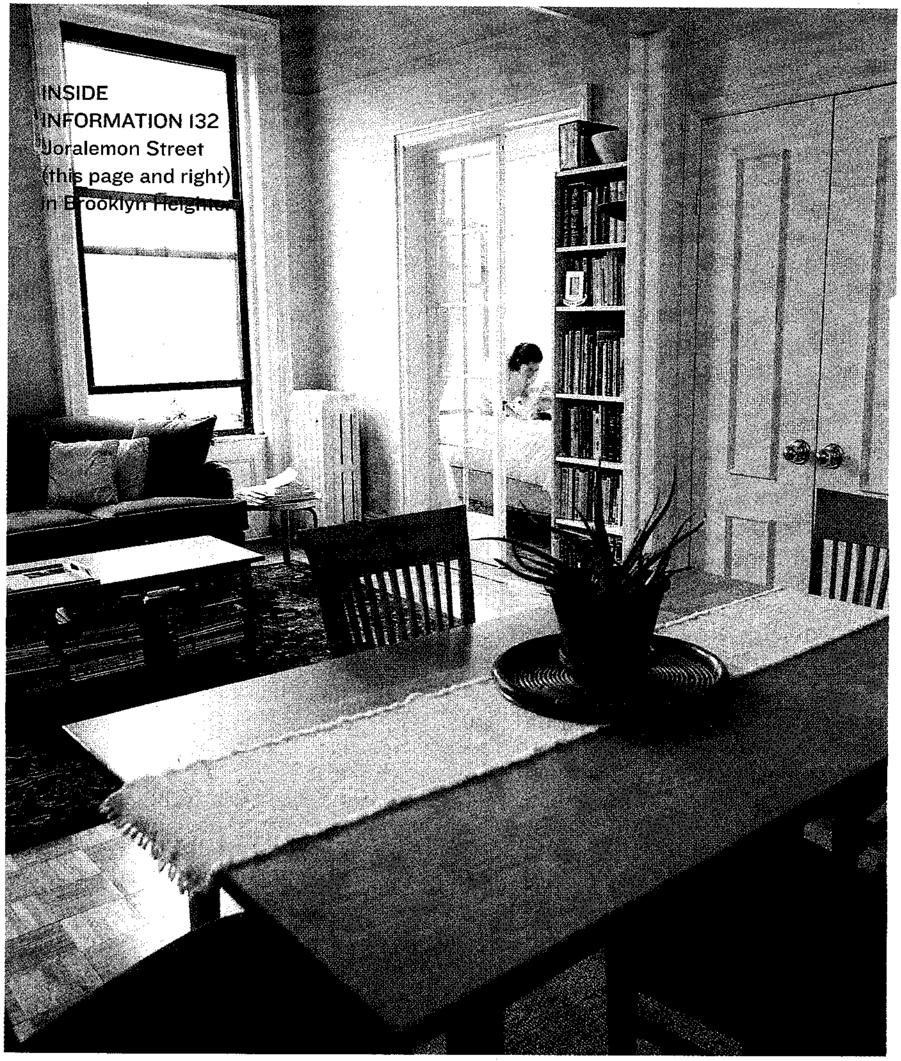
WHAT $150,000 BUYS NOW

BY MICHAEL DOLAN

IN REAL ESTATE, WHEN YOU TALK TO BROkers about "the good old days," they tend to drop references to the last century—December 1999, to be precise. "The market price of properties has gone up 15 percent since January, across the board," says Klara Madlin of the eponymous brokerage. "Studios that were once $150,000 on the Upper West Side are now going for the low 200s. If you want any kind of value, you have to head to the West Hundreds: We're opening a Harlem office this month just to meet the demand." Better hurry. "Manhattan Valley may be the only undervalued part of town," says John Caraccioli of Halstead, referring to the area in the low Hundreds west of Central Park. "If you're lucky, you may still be able get a one-bedroom there."

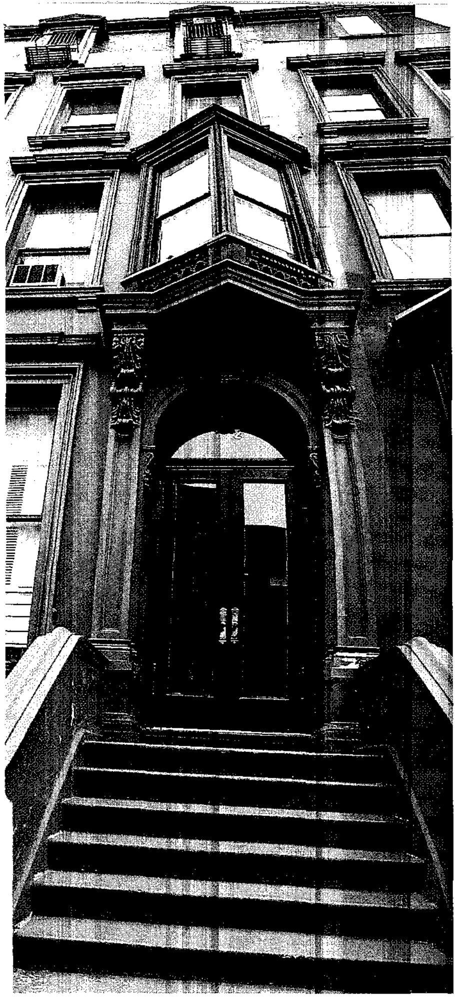
Otherwise, for $150,000, five out of five brokers agree, below 100th Street, Manhattan might as well be Studio City. "The ones you can get at that price won't even have an alcove," says Madlin. "They will literally be a room." Nan Schiff of Douglas Elliman agrees. "You're not going to get a new kitchen," she says. "In fact, you'd be pleasantly surprised to walk in and see a kitchen. There's always going to be one obstacle to overcome: garbage cans outside the window, or you're on the first floor and the light is compromised."

Move farther toward the outskirts of Manhattan, and the story improves only slightly. "You're trading space for location," says Julie Jacobs, also of Douglas Elliman. "You can usually forget about outdoor space, although I did sell some studios with balconies at 1160 Third Avenue, between 67th and 68th, that fall around that range." Once you see the prices in Brooklyn Heights, you may want to check to see if the Brooklyn Bridge is still there; they're more in line with those of Manhattan. "For $150,000, I'd steer people toward Clinton Hill or Fort Greene," says Cheryl Nielsen-Saaf of Corcoran. "Forget Brooklyn Heights, Cobble Hill, and Carroll Gardens; there's just a lack of inventory. Most of the properties in these areas are rentals to start with, unless they're old schools or churches. Those structures are the only places that have studios. I'd say $200,000 is a better starting point for a small Brooklyn one-bedroom." And as the distance widens between you and Manhattan, so does the space between your walls. "For 150, you can do a two-bedroom co-op in most of Queens," says Helen Keit of First Choice Real Estate. "It's too low for an attached house, but you'll get yourself a nice-size co-op in a variety of buildings in any area." Susan Goldy of Susan E. Goldy Real Estate has a similar assessment of the Bronx: "You can get a studio in a luxury condo building in Riverdale with plenty of amenities—doorman, swimming pool, central air, a river view—for $80,000. If you'd rather have space, you can get a one-bedroom or a junior four in



INSIDE INFORMATION 132
Joralemon Street (this page and right) in Brooklyn Heights.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARK JENKINSON



most postwar buildings, but prices at top luxury co-op buildings get closer to $200,000." To put it gently, $150,000 is the rock-bottom price it costs to become a property owner within city limits. At best, you'll be sleeping in a recent-vintage townhouse on the South Shore of Staten Island. "It's not going to be a great property," says Jon Salmon of Salmon Real Estate, "and yet, you'll still see 100 people at the open house. It doesn't even matter if it's a bungalow. You'd better be ready to buy it, or you'll be homeless."

Greenwich Village

450-square-foot co-op studio at
24 Fifth Avenue, at 9th Street.
Paid: $135,000; maintenance, $400.

Joel Odum owns a beautiful Victorian house. Unfortunately, it's located in the Cleveland Park section of Washington, D.C. As an employee of the U.S. General Services Administration, Odum needs to spend more time in New York this year, so he set a limit of $150,000 and decided he'd find a studio. But he wasn't up for sweating it out in today's real-estate souk: "My goodness, you show up at these open houses, and there are dozens of people there clamoring and reaching and grabbing. It's like a yard sale!" Brokers were equally disillusioning: "They would tell me things like 'Oh, you'll love the Upper East Side.' But I don't want to live there. 'Oh, don't worry, you're gonna love it.' If I'd seen one more wall with exposed brick, I think I would have put my head through it."

Enter Nan Schiff of Douglas Elliman, who diagnosed Odum's problem immediately. "Joel had to travel back and forth between D.C. and New York constantly," says Schiff. "It made it impossible for him to land a place. At $150,000, you'd better have a check ready. If you're not ready to make the deal, you'll lose the property within an hour." Schiff found a studio for Odum in a well-located and -maintained Art Deco building at Fifth Avenue and 9th Street, an old hotel that had been remodeled. "I described the space to Joel over the phone," she says. When Odum liked what he heard, Schiff went in with an aggressive bid, secured him a pre-approved mortgage from a broker, had a lawyer immediately draw up the papers, and put together a package on Odum so stellar that the co-op board pushed all other interested parties aside.

The sixth-floor space has the feel of a hotel room—basic, with a tiny separate kitchen containing scaled-down appliances—but Odum doesn't really care. "I don't need a house; I just need a place to sleep and hang my clothes," he says. He's just three subway stops away from the office and a short walk away from two parks and dozens of restaurants.

Days later, when Odum finally passed through the place, he took one look and signed the final papers: "My friends said, 'Are you crazy? Paying that kind of money without seeing it first?' You bet! At that point, I'd done everything. I've asked strangers on the street if they knew of any places. People told me to give the super a hundred bucks to find out about empty spaces. Then Nan goes out of her way to find me a space that's only $135,000! She treated me like I was Brooke Astor!"

Brooklyn Heights

600-square-foot one-bedroom co-op
at 132 Joralemon Street.
Paid: $147,000; maintenance, $712.

"Since my wife and I moved from Minneapolis a few years ago, I still don't think we've gotten over the sticker shock," says architect Victor Pechaty. Pechaty and his wife, Dinorah, first settled into a 250-square-foot studio in Brooklyn Heights with an $1,100-a-month rent. "We loved the Heights," he says. "We loved the architecture, and it had a real urban character. The apartment was fine, but when Dinorah became pregnant, we had to find a bigger place." After a few months of scouting the neighborhood, the Pechatys found a street-level one-bedroom with bars on the window. "We would've been glad to take it," Pechaty says. But the co-op board would accept a 10 percent down payment only if the Pechatys also put up a year's maintenance. "We liked the place, but not enough to front that money. So we walked."

A few months later, the couple—and baby Sophia—attended another open house. "We walked out of the apartment, straight over to the Realtor, and put in a bid for $145,000, $4,000 below the asking price," says Pechaty. The seller met them in the middle. With deed in hand, Pechaty has already changed fixtures and some appliances. "But we can't really remodel the kitchen," he says. "There's only a small stove, a refrigerator, a sink, and three small cabinets. There's nothing there to remodel."

Old Town, Staten Island

One-family two-story townhouse on a 16-by-100 lot.
Paid: $133,000.

Working as they do in the computer-support industry, Ann Marie Grenham and her fiancé, Peter Quadarella, are finding they're busier than ever. They were renting a one-bedroom out in New Dorp, but now it was time to own something. The couple was prepared to spend no more than $150,000 on something with low taxes. "Good schools aren't a concern for us yet," says Grenham.

She would find houses in online listings in her price range, but by the time she called, the property was already sold. "And the few homes we saw, the exteriors were dreadful," she says. Finally, the couple found a home nice enough to actually step inside; it was in Old Town, only a few blocks from a commercial area. "The house is white, and it has these two lovely large windows in front, one upstairs and one downstairs," Grenham says. "We liked the large living room and kitchen opening out to the patio. Upstairs, there's a large master bedroom in front with a smaller bedroom towards the back. And there's a tiny attic for storage."

Grenham and Quadarella paid $133,000, which was $12,000 under the asking price. Within three months, the two-story starter with a two-car driveway was theirs to keep. "It's nice to have the driveway, but we're a three-minute walk from Hylan Boulevard and all the shops and restaurants. An express bus gets us to work in about 35 minutes. It's a breeze; we don't even need our car anymore." ■

WHAT $300,000 BUYS NOW

BY MICHAEL DOLAN

FOR $300,000, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SNARE A separate room for your bed—the only question is how big a bed you'll be able to have. "On the Upper West Side, you'll get not much space—maybe 650 square feet," says Roberta Moser of Halstead. "You'll get more for your money if you go way east, like to York Avenue. But that far east, you almost have to take a bus to Lexington Avenue to catch the subway."

Hop the train down to current hot spots like the West Village, Gramercy, or Chelsea, and the news doesn't get any better. "You may find a one-bedroom," says Michael Zembower of Douglas Elliman in Chelsea, "but at that price, you may not find a doorman building."

Way south, you might still land a one-bedroom with a view. "One-bedrooms start in the low 200s in Battery Park City," says Gary Seiden of Regatta New York Realty. "One with a really nice view of the harbor would bring you closer to $300,000."

To bag other amenities like a doorman, a health club, or even a super who actually lives in your building, swallow your pride and think studio. "You can get a wonderfully grand studio for $300,000," says Jackie Schwimmer of Corcoran. "They're always available in pretty much any area. I sold an unrenovated alcove studio in a doorman building on the Upper West Side that was over 500 square feet. That's more space than some one-bedrooms have, and a better location."

But if you're willing to compromise on location, "you can get a nice detached house in Bayside or Whitestone," says Helen Keit of First Choice in Queens. "Those are two of the more desirable neighborhoods in the borough."

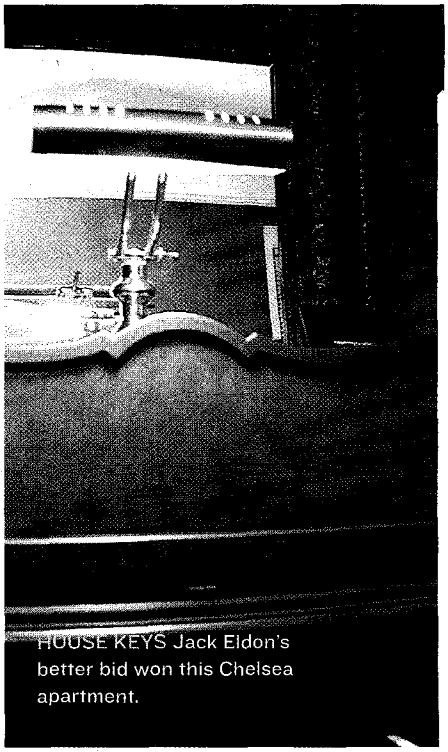
Connie Profaci, owner of the eponymous agency in Staten Island, says great detached houses are available in her neck of the woods, too: "You can get a two-family if you're interested in a rental or a very nice three-bedroom one-family on either shore," she says, "maybe a 50-by-100-foot lot with a garage. You might even be able to squeeze out a four-bedroom in a handyman special."

It's when you reach the Bronx and Brooklyn that the space race gets frantic. "Riverdale would be tight for your budget," says Susan Goldy of Susan E. Goldy Real Estate, "but you could find a three-bedroom in a high-quality co-op building without a problem. If you're willing to look in Kingsbridge, you can still probably find a house in the high 200s, but I'm not sure how much longer that will last."

This seems to be the mantra of every agent: Buy now before you get priced out. Like in Brooklyn, for example. The last 900-square-foot residential loft Helene Luchnick of Douglas Elliman saw go for under $300,000 in the city was in DUMBO in the fall of 1998. (Now even lofts in Hoboken are starting at $450,000.) "*Pffft*, forget Bay Ridge," says Joseph Madaio of ReMax 1st Choice Realty, at Third Avenue and 81st Street. "It's crazy here. We haven't handled a house in that price range in a while. Here, they're going for $400,000." Apartments, however, remain a reasonable deal, partly because of the lengthy subway commute to the city; you can still get a two-bedroom co-op for under $150,000 in Bay Ridge.

In Brooklyn's holy trinity (Brooklyn Heights, Carroll Gardens, Cobble Hill), two-bedrooms are in short supply, but when they're found, they're $350,000, generally. Outside these communities, they can be located practically anywhere. "You may be able to find a three-bedroom in Fort Greene, but they're hard to come by," says Eva Daniels of Eva M. Daniels Realty. If you look hard enough, a handyman special of a house may be yours for the taking. "If you head into Bed-Stuy, Lefferts Manor, Canarsie, or Windsor Terrace, you might find a house, but $300,000 is the rock-bottom price these days."

"Just a couple of months ago, I purchased two brownstones in Fort Greene for under $300,000 apiece," says sculptor Ava Gerber. "The last one was owned by a bank that didn't want to let me look at it. I told them, 'Do me a favor, send someone down here and I'll tell them if I'm buying the building,' " she says. "So they did, and I did." Just be prepared to spend a little more to make your house an actual home.



HOUSE KEYS Jack Eldon's better bid won this Chelsea apartment.

"When a guy at Home Depot asked me why I was buying a 30-foot ladder, I realized something," says Gerber about her future renovations. "There are some things you just shouldn't do yourself."

Chelsea

875-square-foot one-bedroom co-op
in the West Twenties, off Seventh Avenue.
Paid: $290,000; maintenance, $960.

Consider this a warning from Jack Eldon: "Anyone who thinks moving across the street is easy should try it sometime. You might as well move to Montana." Eldon, a marketing executive at Disney, found himself circling yet another open-house listing in the paper—this one for an apartment in an 1890s building directly across the street from his one-bedroom. Only this was a significantly larger space that got considerably better light. There was already an accepted buyer; undeterred, Eldon placed a slightly higher bid, and the apartment was his. "My life was getting bigger," says Eldon, referring to his decision to move in with his significant other, "and I needed a bigger space. The apartment needed work, and it was slightly more than I hoped to pay, but I was optimistic." The problem for Eldon now was unloading his old place. Michael Zembower of Douglas Elliman, the broker for the new apartment, offered to help. "Michael told me he could turn my apartment around in a week," says Eldon. "Needless to say, I wondered if you could do any real-estate transaction in New York in a week. He put a listing in the *Times* for an open house. The listing said, 'This apartment will be sold this weekend for the asking price.' I bet him three tickets to *The Lion King* that he couldn't do it. The next week, I was buying those tickets."

After Eldon sanded floors, painted, and brought in a cleaning service, the new apartment was almost unrecognizable, even to Zembower: "I told Jack, if he wanted to part with it, I could get him $350,000 without much of a hassle." Eldon confirms the appraisal. "I bet against Mike once and lost, so I believe him."

West Village

650-square-foot two-bedroom co-op
at 325 West 11th Street.
Paid $170,000; maintenance, $570.

"I wouldn't say it was a dump," says Kitty Sorell of Corcoran. "It was livable." Sorell is referring to the two-bedroom apartment in the West Village she sold Kenna Thompson, an associate producer at VH-1. "It has crocodile walls—all the plaster was cracked. And the bathroom doesn't have a sink. But there's a big claw-foot tub, and a kitchen you can fit a kitchen table in. And you can't get away from the fact that it's a landmark building, with a great location."

Thompson, who found the apartment via an online listing, took one look at the place and agreed to the asking price on the spot. "The same woman owned it for 23 years," says Thompson. "She sublet it most of the time, so I guess no one really wanted to put any money into something they were renting." Thompson has already brought in eight contractors to refurbish the woodwork, windows, and walls. "One guy told me he could do the job for $16,000," she says. "He wanted to cover the floors with linoleum. But I said, 'I'm not going to live in Mel's Diner.' Another guy said, 'I'm not touching it for less than $120,000.' Sorry, Mr. Park Avenue—that's not happening, either." Thompson has started to do a lot of the work herself. "I stripped away about a half-inch of paint from the window sills. It's like an excavation. I'm seeing green paint, then pink, and I'm thinking, *Yep, somebody lived here in the fifties.*" Every day, Thompson discovers something new—an extra detail in the woodwork, a hiding space for valuables in the 115-year-old original wooden floor: "I bumped into something in the kitchen; this board flies off, and I realize the kitchen has one of those double sinks you see in restaurants. It just gets better every day."

An elderly man came to one of the open houses; he said he grew up in the apartment with his five brothers and sisters. He walked around, touched some of the woodwork, gazed at the interior for a few moments and said, "Yes, this is exactly how it looked when I was here." Be it ever so crumbled, there's no place like home.

Central Park North

1,100-square-foot two-bedroom co-op
at 1270 Fifth Avenue, near 108th Street.
Paid $300,000; maintenance, $645.

Like many other New Yorkers, Benjamin and Christine Anagnos looked at five apartments before settling on one; unusually, most of the apartments were in the same building. "It's equidistant from our

LA GATTA SUL TETTO CHE SCOTTA

jobs," says Ben, who's director of finance and administration for a coalition of grant-funded hospitals, headquartered at Harlem Hospital. His wife does nonprofit work at the Association of Art Museum Directors. "They're supposed to be building the Museum for African Art about two blocks north of here," she says. "When they extend Museum Mile to include it, we'll be a part of that. Fifth Avenue will always be Fifth Avenue."

Fifth Avenue is also one of the few locations that allow a sixth-floor tenant to have a park view. "In our last place," Christine remembers, "I knew what the guy across the way from us was wearing." The Anagnoses weren't in much of a hurry to move; they were paying $1,000 a month for a one-bedroom at 77th and York, well below the going rent. "We got a deal on it, and that was seven years ago," says Ben. But when they found out from Jackie Schwimmer at Corcoran (the mother of one of Ben's grammar-school friends) that an apartment was available at this Fifth Avenue location, they jumped. "It was kind of in a shambles," says Christine. "There was no kitchen. But when we saw the view, we knew. Not to mention the size issue. I mean, if we're going to start a family, there was no way we'd switch to another one-bedroom."

Since their new apartment had been vacant and deteriorating for the past four years (it was sold by an estate), the Anagnoses were able to negotiate renovations into the deal. "We have some input in what they're doing," says Ben, "For example, they're installing extra outlets and phone lines in every room. If we want to upgrade to DSL or fiber-optic lines, we're ready to go." Christine adds, "We also don't have to figure out how much we need to spend to fix up the apartment. It's built into the price. We're going to have new floors, new kitchen, and new appliances. I won't have to scrape the gook off of somebody's old stove." Ben, the M.B.A. of the family, checked into the finances and found out the building, erected in 1960, had just completed paying its mortgage. As he and Christine suspected, the corporation had remortgaged to upgrade the amenities. "They've told us that over time, they'll be redoing the lobby, the elevators, everything," says Ben. So is there anything wrong with the place? "Well," Christine says, "one of the first things that occurred to me was, where am I going to rent a video around here? But after seeing the view and finding out how quiet the apartment could be, I thought, *Who needs videos?*" ■

WHAT $500,0 BUYS NOW

BY BRIAN KENNEDY

AS LITTLE AS FIVE YEARS AGO, THE $500,000 New York City home—whether a mint, oak-detailed brownstone on a prime tree-lined Park Slope street or a spacious loft in a turn-of-the-century factory building in TriBeCa—was a benchmark for upper-middle-class families. You might have wanted more, but you didn't really *need* more. But nowadays, unfortunately, half a million is no longer a family-size number, unless you're willing to ride a few more subway stops.

What it should buy you is a very nice one-bedroom in a name-brand neighborhood—but don't get greedy and expect a Central Park panorama out your kitchen window. And adding bedrooms inevitably means subtracting something else: views, light, amenities, neighborhood. "I've got a 1,000-square-foot one-bedroom on Fifth, without a view, for $525K; a two-bedroom on 71st and Second for $490K; and a two-bedroom, two-bathroom in Carnegie Hill, prewar building, for $549K. I've also got a condo on 72nd and Third—it doesn't have a lot of light, but it's in a stellar location," says Lisa Meyer of Stribling's uptown office.

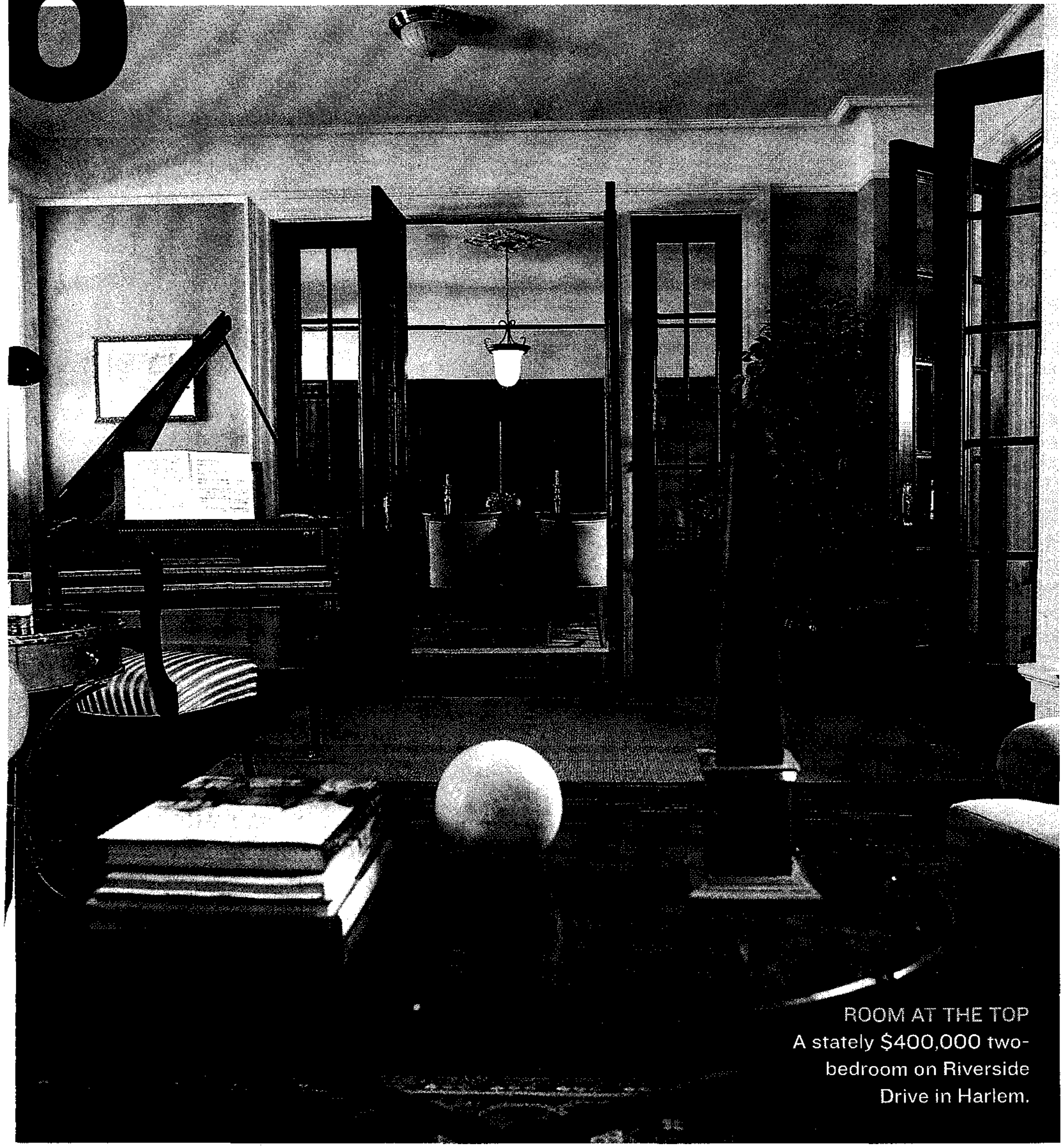
Downtown, the situation is similar—not too shabby, but not quite the apartment of your dreams, either. "I have a couple expecting a baby who are in contract for a 1,200-square-foot two-bedroom, one-bath loft on Hudson Street—it's closing for essentially $550,000," says Sean Murphy Turner, a Stribling vice-president downtown. "It's beautiful, with barrel-vaulted ceilings, but it's still a definite fixer-upper." "We sold an 800-square-foot one-bedroom in the West Village with a fireplace and sunken living room for $550,000," says James Ferrari of Benjamin James Associates.

The formerly budget-friendly East Village and the Lower East Side now deliver solid values but not bargains. "You can get a nice one- or two-bedroom in the East Village," says Ferrari. "A very nice one-bedroom—800 to 900 square feet, maybe a fireplace and some open space." The Lower East Side is of course cheaper, but, says Steven Hauser of Susan Penzer Real Estate, "the problem's that most buildings there are tenement buildings—they don't have the details and features that a lot of today's buyers are looking for."

In fact, multiple bedrooms and period detail for under $500,000 in Manhattan can be pretty much summed up in one word: Harlem. "I've got a gorgeous two-bedroom, two-bath in the Grinnell, a huge 1911 apartment building in the West 150s on Riverside Drive, for $400,000," says Willie Kathryn Suggs, the legendarily hyperactive doyenne of uptown real estate. "You don't get an apartment in this building unless somebody dies. It's got seventeen mahogany doors, a library, a maid's room, loads of detail, the works."

In Harlem, even the townhouse dream is very much alive. You can, for instance, get a twelve-room gut rehab on historic Striver's Row for $440,000. "The building's in horrible shape," says Suggs. Well-maintained places are leaping over $600,000. "Several houses have closed for over half a million," Suggs says. "As soon as it comes in, it walks. There's no fear here, and there's a lot of wealthy blacks who have a nostalgic longing for an area they've never lived in."

Brooklyn Heights, at least in terms of real-estate values, is essentially an appendage of Manhattan. Elsewhere in Brooklyn, half a million can still—barely—get you a townhouse, though compromise is necessary. "You can still purchase a house in Park Slope," says Aguayo & Huebener's Roslyn Huebener, but it would be "in the South Slope, or in the Northwest between Fourth and Fifth Avenues. It would be a one- or two-family house in decent condition—you could get a house in perfect condition in the South Slope. We're just selling a three-story brownstone in Prospect Heights to a



ROOM AT THE TOP
A stately $400,000 two-bedroom on Riverside Drive in Harlem.

couple for under $550,000—it had some termite damage, which frightened a lot of buyers." In the more prestigious North Slope, "you can still get two-bedroom condos for under $500,000."

Fort Greene and Clinton Hill are no longer bargains, either. "The market's changed so over here—some houses are up to a million, although we do have some things in the $600,000s," says Fort Greene Realtor Eva Daniels. She recently sold a house on the Clinton Hill side of Fort Greene for $555,000. "It's a very nice house, but it's on the small side. And the top floor still needs to be renovated."

More-adventurous shoppers (or anyone who just has to have a yard) may want to check out the way-outer boroughs. In Queens, half a million still means something, according to Helen Keit of First Choice Real Estate: a four-bedroom house in Fresh Meadows or Hollis Wood, a three-bedroom in Jamaica Estates or Little Neck. Nice places—but it's a long cab ride to any Keith McNally boîte.

Chelsea

900-square-foot one-bedroom at 270 West 17th Street.
Paid: $475,000; common charges, $500.

Andraya Clermont is not your typical New York apartment buyer—she's 18 and a student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, where she's studying forensic science. But since John Jay's dorms are all the way out in Brooklyn, and since, she adds, "I have two dogs, and I didn't want to leave them behind," her mother took pity on her, opening the family coffers to buy her an apartment.

"I found this one on my first day looking," Clermont says, although she looked at fifteen or twenty other places as well, just to be sure. It was priced at $459,000, but then, says Clermont, "all these people put offers on it at once." Clermont—or her mother—didn't blink. "It had everything I wanted," she says. Most important, it could easily become a two-bedroom—which Clermont will need to accommodate her 23-year-old sister, who'll be moving to New York once she gets out of the Army in August.

The Clermont family dormitory has the added benefit of being safer than Andraya's previous digs. "I live on 13th between First and A," she says, "and Chelsea is way cleaner. I don't have to worry about drug dealers on every corner now."

Hamilton Heights

4,700-square-foot townhouse at 465 West 141st Street.
Paid: $425,000.

Bradley Erickson thought he'd found the Harlem townhouse of his dreams (with the help of—who else?—the aforementioned Willie Suggs). He was already in contract when "three of the owner's seven children filed a claim to the house!" he says. Unfortunately, Erickson had already told his old landlord he was moving out of his Chelsea one-bedroom. "My landlord wanted me to sign a one-year lease again—with a three-month notice of vacancy—so I told him to use my deposit as my last month's rent, and *bye-bye.*"

The service-oriented Suggs came to the rescue, putting Erickson up in a studio owned by one of her agents, which turned out to be around the corner from the house he eventually bought. "The agent was really nice—she still screams, 'Bradley! Are you there?' at me from across the yard," Bradley says. "It was kind of frustrating, though; you're trying to buy a 5,000-square-foot house and you're living in a 225-square-foot studio."

After three and a half months, the brownstone around the corner went on the market, and Suggs gave the first look to Erickson. He didn't dally. "It was listed with the Department of Buildings as an

QUICK STUDY: Andraya Gleimein in her new Chelsea apartment.

SRO, eight units," Erickson says. "But it wasn't really broken up too much. It's got four floors and a cellar."

Is there a fireplace?

"How about eight fireplaces?" he says. "And there's a patio and a terrace on the second floor. I keep on discovering new things—there's mahogany paneling, beautiful doors, two staircases." Renovations, he says, will take six to twelve months.

And how does he feel about his new neighborhood? "I like the volatility," he says. "It's a lot more untapped than Brooklyn. I'll give you my standard line: I'm six-foot-four and I have a dog who looks like a pit bull! Do you think I'm scared?"

Then he discards the macho act. "To be honest," he says, "I've gotten mugged in the West Village. I don't feel that at all—I don't have any hesitations here."

Park Slope

1,700-square-foot two-bedroom co-op at 47 Plaza Street.
Paid: $445,000; maintenance, $1,500

On Fifth Avenue or Central Park West, an apartment in a building designed by the legendary prewar architect Rosario Candela is liable to run well into seven figures—if not eight. But Irishman Richard Gilhooly just got one for under $500,000—overlooking Brooklyn's Grand Army Plaza. Gilhooly, who works as a bond strategist, calls it "beautiful, old, and well preserved, with carved wooden elevators. There's a nice marble entrance hall, and the 24-hour doormen are all very nice. It feels comfortable, personal, friendly, a lot like a Manhattan building."

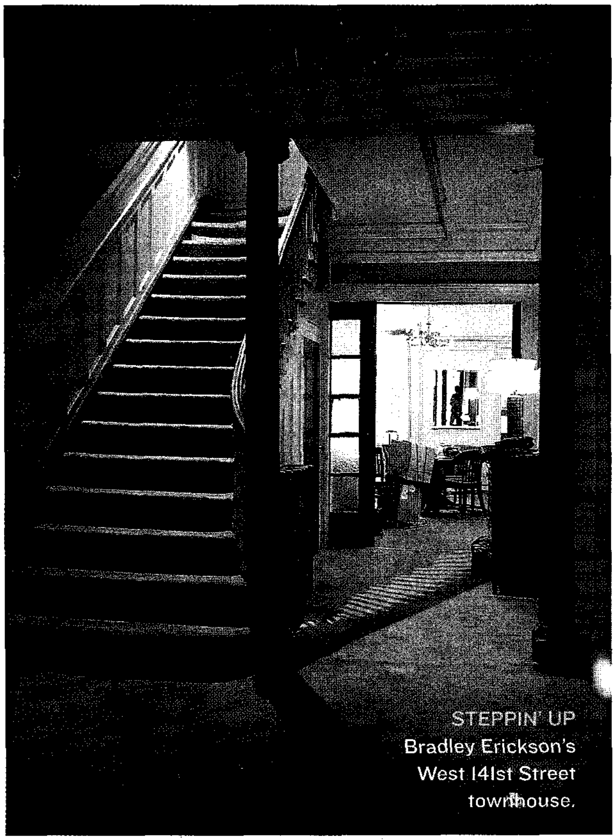
Gilhooly, who's married with a young son, looked in Brooklyn for seven months before discovering this gem. "There isn't too much on the market," he says. "We had found a four-story house in the area but decided that it was too much work to take on. And actually someone put in a higher bid for this apartment after we did, but we had already closed the deal.

"The apartment's generously proportioned, about 1,700 square feet. Forty-seven Plaza is a triangular building, so the kitchen is triangular as well, which makes it a very interesting room," Gilhooly says. "There was originally a maid's room bordering the kitchen, with a little bathroom, but that wall's been knocked down and now it's a laundry room."

The apartment is in what is euphemistically called estate condition. "It pretty much needed a total renovation," he says. "It had original wiring and needed work done to the floors, walls, details, and a lot of other things."

The 360-degree views, however, needed no improvements at all. "That was a big selling point for us. From one side there's the World Trade Center and the Statue of Liberty. From the dining room there's the Verrazano Bridge, and from the front window there's Grand Army Plaza and the monuments there."

Candela's 834 Fifth may be magnificent, but it's got nothing like that. ■



STEPPIN' UP
Bradley Erickson's
West 141st Street
townhouse.

WHAT $800,000 BUYS NOW

BY STEFANI EADS

SASHA DINOUR, MANAGING PARTNER OF TRIumph Property Group, shakes his head as he clicks through listings on the computer screen in his brokerage's sparse Flatiron office. "Eight hundred thousand dollars won't get you what it would have just four months ago," he says. "In January, we closed on a penthouse loft on West Broadway in SoHo for 825. It's a nice condo—prewar, two bedrooms, two baths, skylights, 1,300 square feet with a 670-square-foot roof terrace. But it needs a lot of work." Today, he shows me a 2,700-square-foot condo in Chelsea's flower district for $775,000. "It's half the entire floor, but the windows face the back of other buildings. It all depends on what you want, but you're definitely going to have to be willing to give something up."

So what's out there for $800,000? Try a 2,300-square-foot co-op on Lafayette Street in SoHo for $850,000. "It's got two bedrooms and two baths, but you can feel the subway going underneath the apartment," says Dinour. Three bedrooms? "It's highly unlikely you'll find a three-bedroom for that price downtown," he says. What about four? "Look in Hoboken," he says with a shrug.

"The range downtown is anywhere from 1,000 square feet to 2,700 square feet," says Dinour, "but 1,500 square feet is the breaking mark. If you get lucky, you'll get that with a view. Go anywhere above it and you're going to have to compromise the view or the amount of space," he says. "It's harder to find a prewar downtown because there's always a premium on them," agrees Rob Anzalone of Fenwick-Keats. On the other hand, he says, "you could find a very pleasant, sunny two-bedroom, two-bath condo in a prewar doorman building on the Upper West Side. There would be no view of the park or river, but you'd have a separate dining area or maybe even a formal dining room."

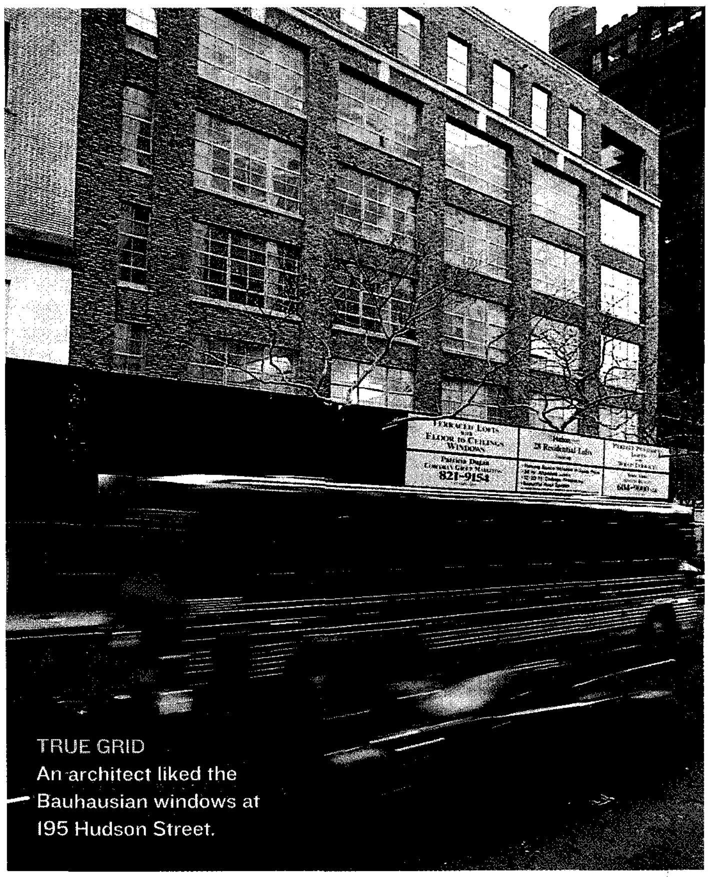
On the East Side, says Rob Sussman of Goodstein Realty NYC, "you might get a one-bedroom condo on Fifth Avenue with park views and a full kitchen, but you'd have to go all the way east to York Avenue to get a three-bedroom."

Dreaming of a townhouse? Dream on (except if your dream is Harlem). Dexter Guerrieri, who specializes in townhouses on the Upper West Side for Vandenberg Real Estate, says he recently sold two properties near 105th Street on Manhattan Avenue for about $875,000 each that were never officially listed. "They went in a heartbeat," he says. "Otherwise, it's been a number of years since I've had anything in this price point."

In Brooklyn Heights, finding an $800,000 place "is a fight," says Kevin Carberry, owner of Carberry Real Estate. "There's a lot of buyers, and little availability." He knows of a three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath with full living room, dining room, eat-in kitchen, and two fireplaces on the parlor floor of a brownstone that might be on the market soon—"but it won't start at less than 875, and it doesn't have any outdoor space." What about a townhouse? "For 800?" he asks incredulously. "Not right now." Townhouses can still be found in other Brooklyn neighborhoods in that price range—but even in formerly bohemian Fort Greene, the $1 million mark has been broached.

TriBeCa

2,270-square-foot condo loft at 195 Hudson Street. Paid: $790,000; common charges, $1,200.



TRUE GRID
An architect liked the Bauhausian windows at 195 Hudson Street.

To most people, 2,270 square feet of completely unfinished space for almost $800,000 wouldn't sound that appealing. Unless you're Tom Klinkowstein. "It's an architect's dream," he says of his new sixth-floor TriBeCa condo. A Web-design consultant and professor of digital design at Pratt Institute, Klinkowstein wanted a place that would serve as a showcase for his own vision, his own talent (as does his

WHITE CASTLE
A $790,000 two-bedroom Chelsea loft.

current SoHo loft, which has been featured in interior-decorating magazines like *Elle Decor*). "We didn't want an aesthetic pushed upon us," he says. Klinkowstein, 50, bought the loft space with his girlfriend, Elizabeth Gillett, 38, a designer of fashion accessories. "We started out modestly—looking at around 300," he says. "We couldn't find anything we liked." It wasn't until Klinkowstein and his architect walked past the building at 195 Hudson that he saw something that inspired him. "We didn't want anything traditional-looking, and the windows from the outside were exceptional—large and done in a way that's not sentimental," he says. "I like things that look very clean and Bauhausian." For now, the space has nothing more than concrete walls and floors and a kitchen and bathroom that meet only minimal legal requirements. Susan Barrie, his broker at Douglas Elliman, quips: "You have to have vision to be able to appreciate this place." Klinkowstein's aesthetic for his new loft owes something to his childhood dream of being an astronaut. "Imagine the space station from [the movie] *2001*. Something contemporary and futuristic that won't look silly in ten years." His plans include elevated bedrooms and offices, neutral colors, and an "undulating wall of see-through material separating the living space from the guest space." Klinkowstein estimates the renovations will cost him another $250,000 to $400,000, pushing him over the million-dollar mark. The couple hope to move in by the end of the year. A wait, he says, that will be well worth it: "We have a plain slate to work from, which is what we wanted."

Wall Street

2,350-square-foot, three-bedroom condo near the New York Stock Exchange.

Paid: $805,000; maintenance, $1,956.

The buyer of this property, a 35-year-old lawyer, looked for only a few weeks before landing this apartment in the heart of the financial district, and made an offer immediately. "I really liked the place and knew that with the market the way it is these days, if you find something you want, you have to take it," he says from his current residence in Brooklyn's Boerum Hill. Wall Street's lack of grocery stores and laundromats is a downside, he admits—"but there are plenty of restaurants that deliver."

With three bedrooms and two baths laid out over an entire floor, the apartment not only has the kind of space he was looking for but also lets in lots of light. "I hadn't thought of Wall Street as a residential area before," he says, "but the location is great and the apartment has some of the best views I saw in my range."

Morningside Heights

3,500-square-foot townhouse at 128 Manhattan Avenue, between 105th and 106th Streets.

Paid: $875,000.

Hugh Cosman and his wife, Mariko Gordon, had no choice but to look for a new place to live. The couple, along with their two small children, were keeping house in two small, adjacent one-bedroom apartments, and they soon expected Gordon's mother to join them. "We basically live in one apartment and sleep in the other and kind of streak across the hallway from one to the other," says Gordon. The two embarked on an apartment search that lasted, off and on, upwards of two years. "The more we looked, the more we got depressed," says Cosman, who learned quickly how to discern the losers directly from the ads. " 'Rambling' means poorly laid out. 'Estate condition' means the place needs extensive renovation," he says, laughing. Of the twenty properties they scrutinized, one was especially memorable. "It was on 157th and Riverside Drive, and it looked like a crack house," Gordon says. "You could look up straight to the top floor since each level had rotted through, and there was even a bathtub hanging from the plumbing on the ceiling."

"We'd sort of given up," says Gordon, when they got a call from Vandenberg's Dexter Guerrieri about a townhouse on Manhattan Avenue. "I saw it and called Hugh from the backyard," Gordon says. "We went back that night and talked to the neighbors. Then we made an offer the following morning." Built in 1886, the house has its original woodwork and one of the original mirrors, Cosman says. In fact, the story goes, the seller's mother bought the house in 1948 from a Communist who kept printing presses in the parlor—at least until the FBI came looking for him. "It's just got tremendous soul," Gordon says. Cosman estimates he'll spend somewhere between $50,000 and $100,000 more on renovations. "But if you're buying a place your kids can grow up in," Gordon says, "you don't mind paying market top." ▬

WHAT $1,500,000 BUYS NOW

BY CARL SWANSON

“WHAT CAN YOU GET FOR $1.5 MILLION?” says independent broker Patricia Burnham, calling from her car on the way back from the Asian Art Fair at the Park Avenue Armory. “Not even a one-bedroom on Fifth Avenue. I recently sold a penthouse on Fifth—a one-bedroom—for almost $2 million. It wasn’t even that big. It’s probably the size of your apartment.”

People who don’t require penthouses should at least be able to get a two-bedroom for that much these days, maybe even with a maid’s room—what’s known as a “classic six” in industry parlance. You can still find them on Sutton Place, with balconies. But times are tough on the Upper East Side. “One-point-six million dollars would have bought you a 1,600-square-foot two-bedroom at the Empire,” a new condo building on East 78th Street, says Alexa Lambert of Stribling & Associates. “But they’re gone. And that’s on Third Avenue, where everybody said they’d never live—a block away from the subway and near Lenox Hill Hospital.”

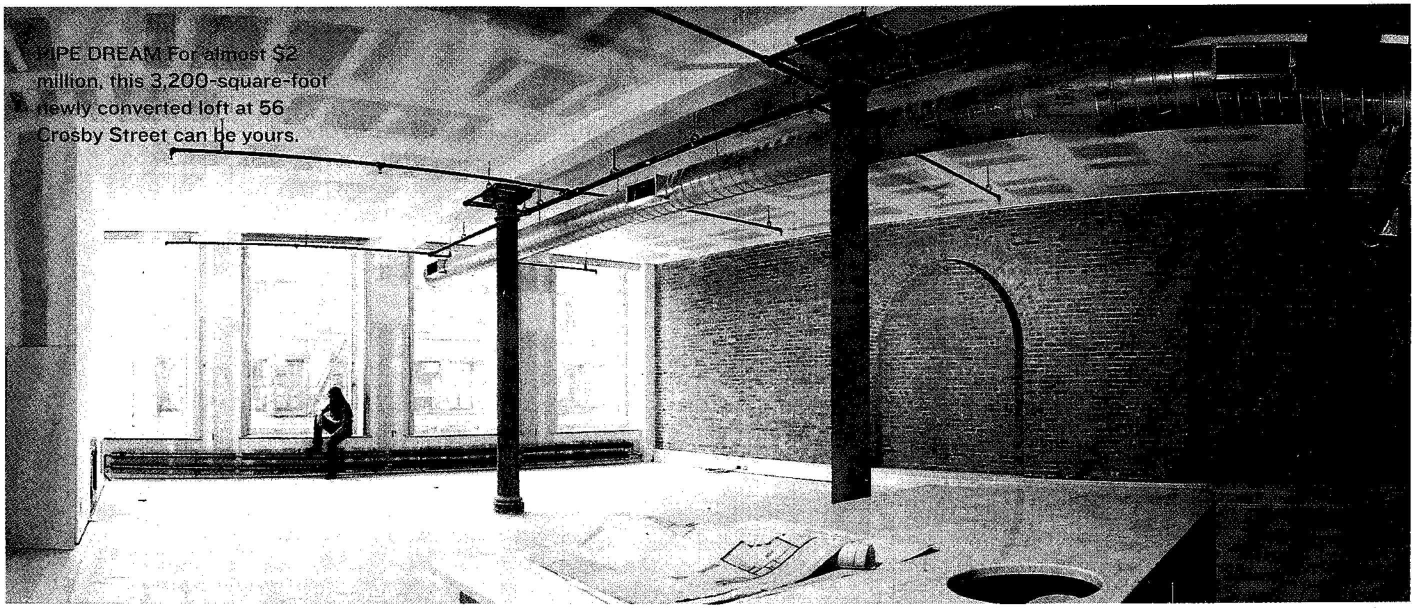
“You used to be able to get a modest classic six on Park Avenue for that much,” says Corcoran senior vice-president Scott Durkin. “Not anymore. You get maybe 1,500 square feet. It *would* get you a five-room condo on the West Side. But the real bang for your buck these days is in lofts. You’re getting more space, and they’re laid out more like an apartment; the days of the single big room with one bathroom and a futon are over. And most of the new loft buildings have doormen.”

Over on West 27th Street, two-bedroom, 3,000-square-foot lofts have staked out this range. In TriBeCa, you can get a brand-new 2,600-square-foot loft in Cobblestone Lofts ($1.6 million, even if it does overlook the Holland Tunnel entrance plaza). At 158 Reade Street, you can buy an 1,800-square-foot townhouse that once illustrated a piece in *New York* Magazine about urban pioneers. “An architect bought it and renovated it. Then it was $120,000 in what was known as the butter-and-egg district,” says the broker, Stribling/Wells & Gay’s Bruce Ehrmann. Now it’s $1.45 million: “The story of that house is the story of this neighborhood.”

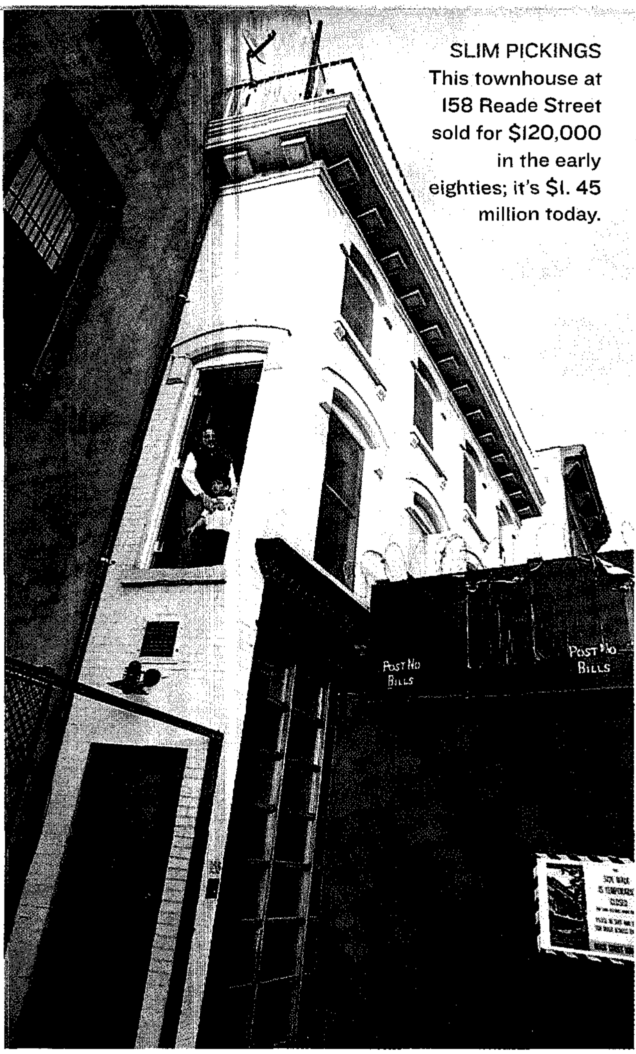
But if you want to live in certain rarefied-lifestyle zones in the city, your eye is going to have to adjust to the charms of the $1.5 million one-bedroom apartment. “You can still get an incredibly stylish one-bedroom at 32 East 64th Street,” says Kirk Henckels of Stribling & Associates. (That’s the building Mike Wallace used to live in.) “Two fireplaces. Feel like you live in Paris.”

What if West End Avenue is more your arrondissement? “Ai-yi-yi,” says Emma O’Brien, who works the Upper West Side for the Halstead Property Company. “A six-room in excellent condition on West End Avenue in the Eighties. That’s not quite a million-five, but it’s pretty close. Or a seven that needs work.”

But not on Central Park West, where, according to Brown Harris Stevens’s Elizabeth Sample, a classic six “on the side” of the building, meaning not overlooking the park, is going for well over $2 million. For views, hie hither to a postwar high-rise, says O’Brien, and you’ll get change back for your million and a half: “You can get a two-bedroom condo with open city views at Two Columbus Avenue or one of the Millennium buildings.”



PIPE DREAM For almost $2 million, this 3,200-square-foot newly converted loft at 56 Crosby Street can be yours.



SLIM PICKINGS
This townhouse at 158 Reade Street sold for $120,000 in the early eighties; it's $1. 45 million today.

But a townhouse on the Upper West Side at that price is pretty difficult, unless you think you'll outlive the passel of rent-stabilized tenants occupying the building's apartments. If you want to live by yourself, "Murray Hill's your best value, just because there's some inventory," says Jon Capobianco of Alice Mason Ltd. "But it'll be a small house, probably 3,500 square feet. And there's nothing on the Upper East Side. Even the smaller houses on East End Avenue are all selling for $2 million. It's tough all over to find a townhouse for 1.5."

The values are even worse downtown, says Capobianco. "It's very hard to find them, and they're very small houses, mostly unrenovated," he says, citing one such house currently for sale on Gay Street for $1.6 million.

Queens is a better bet. The broker for a five-bedroom house on the market in Forest Hills Gardens brags about its enormous, state-of-the-art kitchen. And Brooklyn's not shabby, either, although things are getting a bit tight. "In the central Slope in a prime location, you *should* be able to get something for $1.5 million," says Anna Hamlin of the Park Slope office of William B. May Company, "and you probably can. But the pathway to it will be tortuous.

"It used to be that $1.2 million was the prize amount," she continues. "And that was up until recently. You can't do well at 1.2 anymore. You have to go to one and a half. And you might get a home in great shape. Or not. It depends on the seller. You might have to put $500,000 into it."

Co-ops in Park Slope aren't yet up to that level, she says, although there are some in Brooklyn Heights that are (there's one on the market at $1.45 million at 2 Montague Terrace, with three bedrooms and "lovely partial city and water views").

You can barely spend that much in Harlem, says broker Willie Kathryn Suggs: "That'll get you 54 Hamilton Terrace. When Bishop Tutu's in town, he stays there." It's seventeen feet across with working fireplaces and twelve-foot ceilings, "the most expensive home uptown," she says. That's $1.2 million. Just try not to think about how "they paid $280,000 for it in 1992 and didn't do shit to it but sand the floor."

Upper West Side

Four-story, 3,500-square-foot townhouse on West 88th Street, off Amsterdam Avenue. Paid: $1.33 million.

Architect Paul Gleicher of the Gleicher Design Group and his wife, Lisa, a television producer, were living in a classic six on 72nd Street and Riverside Drive. They'd bought it for $388,000 after its former resident died of old age in 1992. "It was sealed off with police tape," remembers Lisa, "and full of cockroaches lying in the surrender position." They gut-renovated the place and lived there until they had another baby. It was then that they started feeling guilty about her growing up in a six-foot-wide maid's room.

"We started looking and looking and looking," says Lisa. "And quietly put our place on the market." It had pink ceilings, yellow walls, and green hallways, but nevertheless the couple ended up presiding over a bidding war, all offers at or above the asking price. "People were hyperventilating, they wanted our apartment so much," she says. It went for just under $1.5 million.

"While all that was going on, we found a brownstone on West 71st Street that was asking $1.8 million," Lisa continues. "It had no architectural character at all. We were going to turn the top floor into a rental." The only problem was that one tenant wouldn't leave. The seller assured them that he was on his way out. Lisa called and found out that he was indeed fourteenth on the waiting list for senior low-cost housing, but that he'd be there for years. "I could not, in my heart, kick him out. But he was so scary—and his apartment so disgusting—I didn't want to live with him."

Then "we opened up the paper one day and there it was," the brownstone they ended up buying, from Vandenberg's Dexter Guerrieri. "It was thirteen feet wide, and nobody wanted to see it." But since "there was really nothing under $2 million on the Upper West Side," they had a look.

"It's in horrible shape," she says, "beautiful, but there are holes in the ceiling. It's completely dilapidated, unlivable. And divided up into apartments, which because of the hallway brings some of the room widths down to nine feet."

On the other hand, her husband was intrigued as an architect. The building is 66 feet deep. All the kids will have their own bedrooms on the third floor. The parlor floor has eleven-and-a-half-foot-tall ceilings, a bay window, and an onyx fireplace mantel. The oak wainscoting is still intact on the winding staircase.

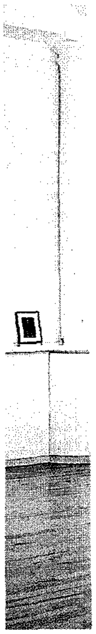
The big problem is going to be the cost of the renovation. The building needs a new boiler, electrical system, plumbing. "It'll take six months," she says.

In the meantime, the family might move out to Long Island to live with their in-laws. "Worst-case scenario," says Lisa, "we do it and then we go broke and sell it."

Upper East Side

Four-bedroom prewar co-op in the Seventies, between Park and Madison Avenues. Paid: $2.1 million; maintenance, $2,900.

"We had friends in apartments like the one we wanted," says the buyer of this elegant co-op



on a side street in a non-power building. After her daughter was born, she and her husband started looking—intending to pay "under a million," she says. They're both successful attorneys, with commensurate expectations: They wanted to move from their newlywed two-bedroom in a boxy sixties building to a seven- or eight-room prewar apartment.

"We were looking for a place to settle down for life," she says, then sighs. "I didn't know how tight the market was. As we looked, it just got tighter and tighter. We bid on seven apartments. *Seven!*" This was frustrating. Isn't life supposed to be easier when you're making good money? "I know partners at law firms who can barely get apartments to accommodate their families," she says.

But they figured they'd never see their kids if they moved to the suburbs. So they stuck it out, bidding on apartments they didn't really want, marveling over the weirdness of the market.

"One of the apartments was *burned*—the whole apartment had been gutted by fire," she says. "You could smell it. You could see it on the walls. It was awful; paint was falling on us. You could see the bed mark. It was like a ghost on the walls." They didn't bid, but in the end, "it went for $1.2 million and it was only a two-bedroom."

Finally, one morning, their broker, Gene Fein of Stribling & Associates, called them from the kitchen of a brand-new listing and said, "Come *now*!" "We dropped everything. We made a bid that was trumped by one or more people. And it went to sealed bids. In that process, we came in second." But they weren't going to let that stop them. "We spent the entire week trying to identify the sellers so we could find someone who knows them to vouch for us. Their broker wouldn't tell us, appropriately." Finally, they figured it out. "We wrote the sellers a letter saying who we were, and found a person who knew them and had them call."

That worked. The buyer sounds happy but a bit shell-shocked by the experience. "Our parents would be horrified, knowing what we paid," she says. "We're at the top of our profession and are working-class zhlubs, apparently."

Flatiron District

2,200-square-foot co-op loft on Fifth Avenue in the Teens.
Paid: $1.1 million; maintenance, $2,258.

When Jamie LeFrak, the 26-year-old grandson of Forbes 400 fixture Sam LeFrak, returned from working in Los Angeles, he actually considered living in one of Grandpa's trademark middle-class apartment projects. "We have a big one down in Battery Park City I thought about moving into," says the young developer. "I think I just wanted to buy an apartment after having spent no more than two or three years in any given place for the last ten years." LeFrak City, in Queens, was presumably too inconvenient.

Back when he was growing up on the Upper East Side ("Where else, right?"), he thought the Flatiron district was the place he wanted to live. "That was in the early nineties. The prices at the time were really inexpensive." But after Princeton, a master's in civil engineering at MIT, and a stint as project manager on the Hollywood & Highland entertainment-and-retail development (which includes the Premiere Theater, future home of the Oscars), he discovered that the neighborhood, like so many others in New York, was undergoing "some kind of luxury shift."

He browsed lofts and more conventional prewar apartments in the Flatiron district for about a month with Sotheby's broker Stephen McRae. "I didn't look that long, but I'm a real-estate guy," he says. "I know what to look for."

Lofts seemed the better value. "I still can't understand why someone would pay more for lower ceilings," he says of some prewar apartments he looked at on lower Fifth Avenue.

Funnily enough, he ended up going back and buying the first place he saw—a 1981 conversion of an 1898 building that used to be "some kind of textile factory and then was a place where tailors would sell their custom wares. One of my construction supervisors said, 'This is where I used to buy my suits in 1952.' " The previous owner "was obviously an investment banker who worked all the time. There was a couch. And a bed." And a 600-square-foot landscaped terrace. "Coming from California, being cooped up in a box seemed a little bit depressing," he says.

Meanwhile, McRae keeps getting offers to sell the place for substantially more than Lefrak paid for it. But he isn't budging: "You flip the apartment, and then where do you live?" ▬

PILLARS OF THE [illegible]ITY Jamie LeFrak's $1.1 million Flatiron district loft conversion has a 600-square-foot terrace.

WHAT $3,000,000 BUYS NOW

BY CARL SWANSON

THREE MILLION WAS WHERE THE QUITE LUXurious was supposed to begin—shelter for people with the money and need to live among the couture addresses. For the past few years, it's been the cutoff for Stribling's annual *Luxury Market Report,* but for next year, "we've given serious thought to raising this number to five or six," says broker Kirk Henckels.

"This may sound ridiculous, but a $2- or $3 million buyer is not a high-end buyer," declares Corcoran's Sharon Baum. "It only gets you seven rooms on Park," explains Michele Kleier of Gumley Haft Kleier. "You certainly don't get a spectacular eight-room for $3 million anymore."

"In what condition? That's the kicker," Baum says. "You could, if you're willing to do work, look at 2,500-square-foot apartments in the [East] Seventies and Eighties in any sort of prewar building. You could probably get an eight-room for $3 million. But it would need everything." That's Park. What about Fifth? "Forget it," she says.

There's a perfectly rational explanation for why, when you go from seven and a half rooms to nine, it'll cost you an extra million and a half. "When you go from three bedrooms and a library to the four and a library—it's not that you've just picked up another room," says Neil Binder, principal of Bellmarc. "The hallways get wider; you pick up extra maids' rooms whether you want them or not; the galleries get larger," explains Baum. "That extra room—it's the most expensive room you can imagine."

And as the months whip by, it's getting even more expensive. Alexa Lambert of Stribling is working with a couple who were well poised to snare a nice eight-room in Carnegie Hill when they started looking last fall. Now they can't touch it. "They looked at a place at 1160 Park Avenue; I think the listing was 2.975. And it was on for a month or so. But by the time they got their act together, there were multiple bids. It was a nice apartment. But we're talking about three bedrooms and no library!"

Okay, even multimillionaires can live without a library, but $3 million should earn you a fairly gargantuan apartment. And it does, reassures Corcoran's Lisa Lippman. "You can get a four-bedroom, four-bath, well-renovated, 3,000-square-foot apartment at the Ansonia with views," she says. "But the same apartment on Central Park West could cost over 4 million."

That is, if you could find it.

"Three mil would buy you a nice ten-room on West End Avenue or Riverside Drive. But there aren't any available," she says before remembering 190 Riverside Drive, just now converting: "There's a nine-room there for $3 million."

What about townhouses?

"Last year, 2.5 might have been an appropriate price for a house in Carnegie Hill east of Park," says townhouse broker Leslie J. Garfield. "Now you're talking 3, 3.5." Cross Park, and things get worse. "Fifth to Madison starting in the Sixties and going way up through Carnegie Hill is a $5 million market for a single-family," he says, "which might need work."

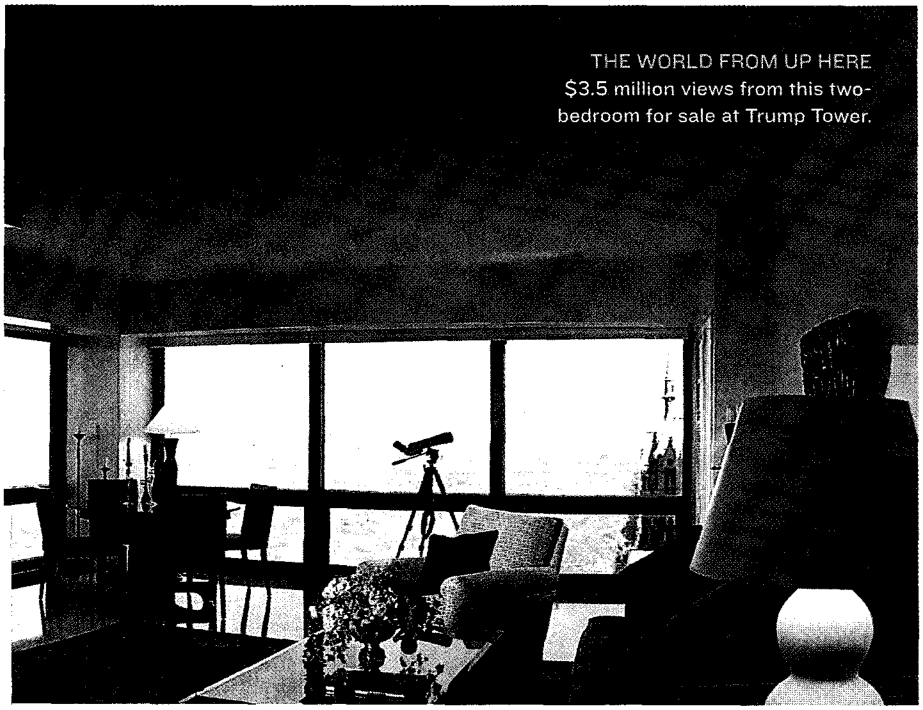
Down on Sutton Place, "you could buy a townhouse, possibly," says Jessica Ushan of Charles H. Greenthal. "But it would be small. Or you could get a large apartment—close to 3,000 square feet, with spectacular views."

Over on the Upper West Side, says Dexter Guerrieri of Vandenberg Real Estate, "the last eight townhouse sales I've had range from $875,000 to $3.5 million. One went in the 5's last year, but, in general, we don't go that high here."

In February, a 25-foot-wide, five-story townhouse in Brooklyn Heights with views of the harbor and Wall Street was in contract for $2.9 million, says William B. May's Chris Thomas. "Right now, that's the market top. The range in Brooklyn Heights runs between 1.5 and 3."

Downtown, most of the new loft spaces come in under $3 million, though sales at that price are becoming more and more common in the established co-op buildings on lower Fifth Avenue.

"Three and a half is what you have to spend to get a family-size loft downtown," said Helene Luchnick of Douglas Elliman. "In SoHo and TriBeCa, that would buy you a renovated 3,000-square-foot loft in a new conversion." Luchnick just had a contract signed for 5,800 square feet at 114 Liberty Street—an area some brokers call "TriBeCa South"—which is to say that it's on the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel side of the World Trade Center. It went for $3.025 million.



THE WORLD FROM UP HERE
$3.5 million views from this two-bedroom for sale at Trump Tower.

"Right now, if you're in that budget, you're looking at very fancy new-conversion lofts—wine cellars, twenty-foot ceilings, incredible finishes," says Lisa Strobing, of Bellmarc's downtown office. "A year ago, $3 million listings weren't that common," says Ken Malian, Douglas Elliman sales manager for TriBeCa and Flatiron. "And now we're seeing them everywhere—even in the financial district."

Or for that amount, you can flee the shadows of Wall Street for the life of a country squire in the Bronx. In Riverdale, you can buy what's described as a 10,000-square-foot "extraordinary English Tudor," with outbuildings, for $2.9 million.

Upper East Side

5,500-square-foot brownstone in the East Eighties, off Fifth.
Paid: $3.375 million.

"It was a two-year search," says the buyer of this house, clearly still angry about it. "We lived on Fifth Avenue. We had a beautiful duplex, and we got a call from a broker: 'Do you want to sell?'

"We lived in the back. My husband always wanted a park view. He said, 'Let's take the money and run.' "

A financial consultant, he had a plan: to rent while they were looking. They didn't think they were being unreasonable. "We wanted only 2,500 square feet—that's small for a family apartment," she says.

But that plan soon went awry. "Nothing came on in the two years we were looking. And if it did come on, you had to be the first one in, or you had no shot. Then it would go to a bidding war and sell for a million over the asking price."

There was the battle for 930 Fifth, where Woody Allen used to live. "Three-point-five for a 2,000-square-foot classic six. That's on the small side for a family." Then the co-op board asked for $12 million in liquid assets. And they didn't have that.

One day, she saw an ad for an apartment at 1120 Fifth Avenue for $3.8 million. The broker hadn't taken her by because the building has summer work rules and only a certain number of apartments can be renovated at a time. So they wouldn't be able to do work until 2001. "She said, 'I wish I could say you could live in it till then, but it's unlivable.' "

There was the battle of 1115 Fifth. "A nine-room was coming on, with views, at $3.8 million. Turns out they actually had an offer at full asking price, sight unseen. They eventually upped it to $7.2 million."

They opened a second front on Central Park West, but that was worse than Fifth Avenue, she said. "In the El Dorado, it was over $4 million for a park view."

"We looked at one at 285 Central Park West, kind of considered a B-rate building; Kevin Bacon lives there. But a beautiful building. For $2.5 million. We were on vacation. When we came back the next week, it was 3.5. And then the broker said the board wants three times, liquid."

She got herself brokers at Elliman, Brown Harris Stevens, Corcoran, and Stribling. "You *need* a broker in every firm," she says. "Brokers don't co-broke the good stuff. They keep it in-house for a week. You're not seeing what they're hoarding."

In the end, it was Lisa Lippman, her Corcoran broker, who found this stucco townhouse with lots of original detail—even if it was sliced into six apartments. They'll convert it back to one-family use. "We were the first ones in, and it was an estate," she says. "The owner had died. We got lucky. Very, *very* lucky."

Park Avenue

Nine-room, 3,200-square-foot prewar co-op.
Paid: approximately $3 million; maintenance, $2,500.

"When we sold our apartment, it was for what we thought was a very high price," says this thirtyish mom about her old place, a 3,700-square-foot co-op at 1175 Park Avenue. Happy with the money her broker, Michele Kleier, got them ($2.5 million), the family shuffled into a rental. "Michele found us a big apartment—expensive, but we have a big family, three children." That was a year and a half ago. And as rental limbo stretched on and on, "things got more expensive," she says. "And there's no turnover; people just aren't moving."

Then there were the co-op boards to contend with. "There's so much money out there, and so much of it is Wall Street," she says. "The figures and the money people have is like candy." Even if you have the two to three times liquid assets, because of the boards, "you still don't know if you can get in or not."

They finally were tipped off to this place, which she describes as "clean, with beautiful wood floors. But we're gutting it," she says. It's on a high floor, looking out—their old apartment faced the back. So after trying to wait out the market, they ended up paying more for less space and still had to renovate. It's not that bad, though: "I would definitely trade space for light again," she insists.

UPTOWN BOOMTOWN

Race and real estate, New York's two greatest passions, cross paths in Harlem, as a community that's been rebuilding itself at warp speed attracts enlightened bargain hunters from downtown.

BY CHRIS SMITH

THE BEST SAD SONGS ARE SET IN EMPTY houses. But the mood today inside a barren townhouse at the crest of a hill on Convent Avenue at 148th Street is more complicated. One couple is moving out, reluctantly leaving behind a happy past. One excited family is moving in, imagining the possibilities.

Leaning against a fireplace mantel in the sunny, oak-paneled living room is Philmore Anderson, the 35-year-old general manager of an Internet music joint venture. He and Fanshen Cox have called this five-bedroom, 3,200-square-foot rusticated-limestone building home since 1996. "One of our first dates was me showing her this house," Anderson says wistfully. "Now she's my fiancée."

There have been other big changes at this address. "Everybody thought this property was a risk; everybody thought I paid too much," Anderson says. Now he's selling for $660,000, the highest price per square foot ever for a Harlem townhouse and an appreciation of $200,000 in four years. "I still question whether I should have sold it or not," Anderson says, "but the house needed new energy. I've taken it to the next level, and I'm now turning it over to the Levys to take the community to the next level."

Downstairs is Amos Levy. He's 38, a managing director in the legal department at a major Wall Street investment bank who grew up in Princeton, New Jersey. He'd been living in the West Eighties near Riverside Drive with his second wife, Carla, the 41-year-old executive editor at *Fitness* magazine; his 8-year-old daughter; and their calico cat, Pumpkin. Their 1,000-square-foot, two-bedroom co-op rapidly grew too cramped ("We kept having all these Blandings moments, opening closets and things falling on our heads," Carla says). The Levys thought about staying on the West Side and considered Park Slope but fell in love with this house uptown.

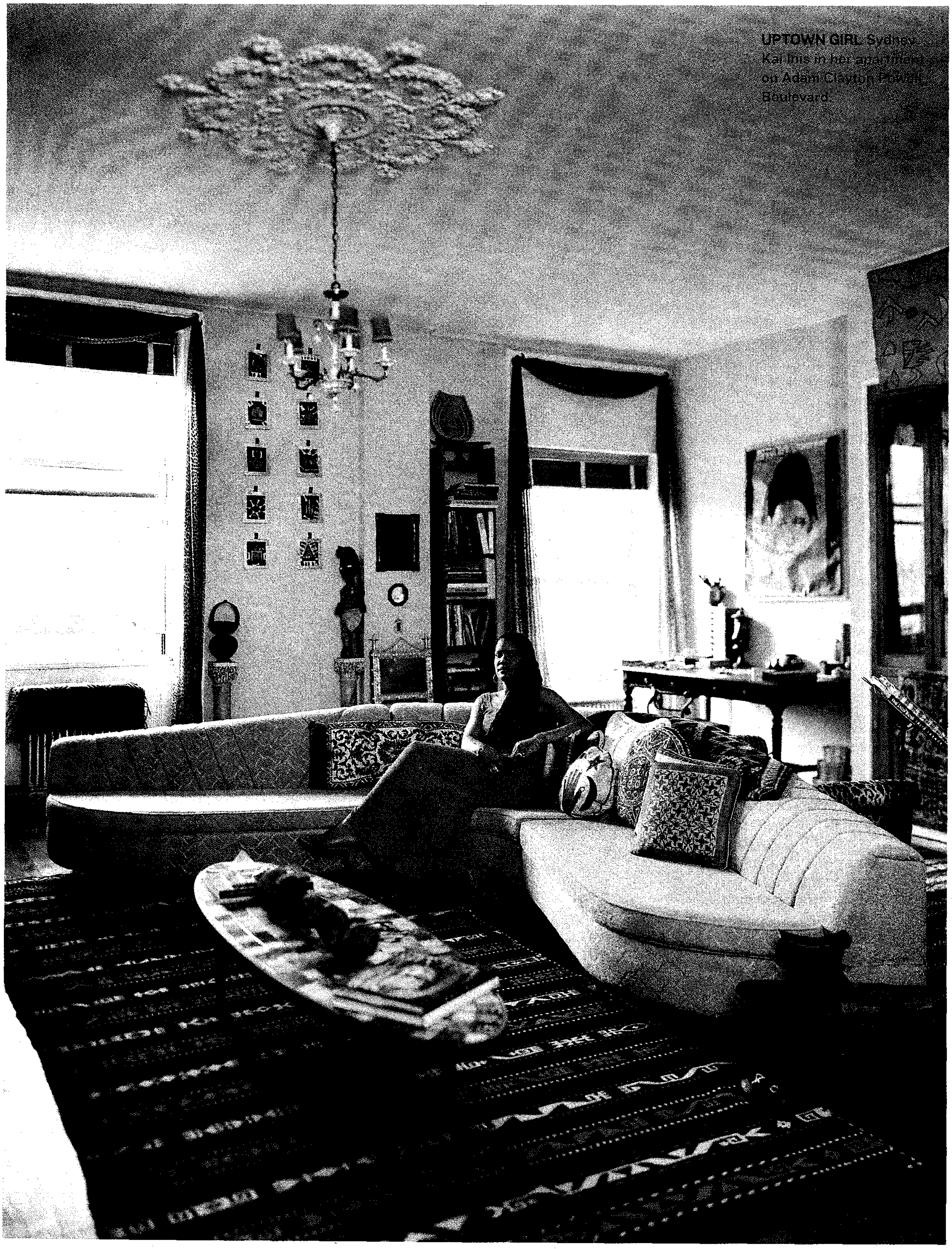
Now Levy, in his banker's navy suit, is here for a pre-closing ritual, the walk-through. Talk of "taking the community to the next level" seems like more responsibility than Levy can contemplate at the moment, when he's struggling just to remember the garbage-pickup schedule.

"We spent a lot of time prior to the bidding, and during the bidding process, making sure we came up here at all times, walking around, taking a cab up, walking around late at night," Levy says so softly his words are faint from two feet away. "I think the quality of life is good. I wouldn't have come to Harlem if I wasn't going to be comfortable. Things have improved here." He pauses and glances around the empty room. "They better have, or I've made a major mistake."

THE OBVIOUS HEADLINE HERE—"Black Man Sells Harlem House To White Man!"—is the wrong one. While it's true that increasing numbers of palefaces are pushing north of 110th Street, the deeper significance of Anderson giving way to Levy is about class, not color. Suddenly, Harlem is a desirable residential option for corporate lawyers living on the Upper West Side and doctors residing in Connecticut. Civil rights for this new crowd—black, white, and Latino—means equal access to Starbucks and a DSL connection.

The febrile real-estate market is drawing buyers and renters who never would have considered the neighborhood even five years ago, and it's pushing them beyond the eternally desirable enclaves of Striver's Row, Astor Row, and Hamilton Terrace. A three-family brownstone on West 131st between Seventh and Eighth Avenues (Adam Clayton Powell and Frederick Douglass Boulevards) that would barely have commanded a six-figure price tag five years ago was just sold by broker Margaret Adams for $435,000. In 1995, the going rate for a fire-damaged shell on 127th Street near Madison Avenue was $40,000; in December, what's left of the building went for $280,000.

"The good change that's happened as of late is that the rental demand among my friends has really skyrocketed," Philmore Anderson says. "Friends wanting rental places in Harlem, recent college graduates who have been out on Wall Street or in the entertainment industry for a couple of years. Whereas five years ago, people were just interested in buying into Harlem. There's this whole cultural shift taking place. Harlem is now safe enough; there are enough basic services, enough beautiful places. It used to be just my



UPTOWN GIRL Sydney Kai Inis in her apartment on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY GREG MILLER

male friends were comfortable up here; now a lot of our female friends are comfortable having an apartment up here."

Harlem rents still look like a bargain compared with, say, the East Village's, but the climb has been vertiginous. Three years ago, a landlord was crazy to ask for more than $1,100 for a three-bedroom in a brownstone. Now the rent is $1,800.

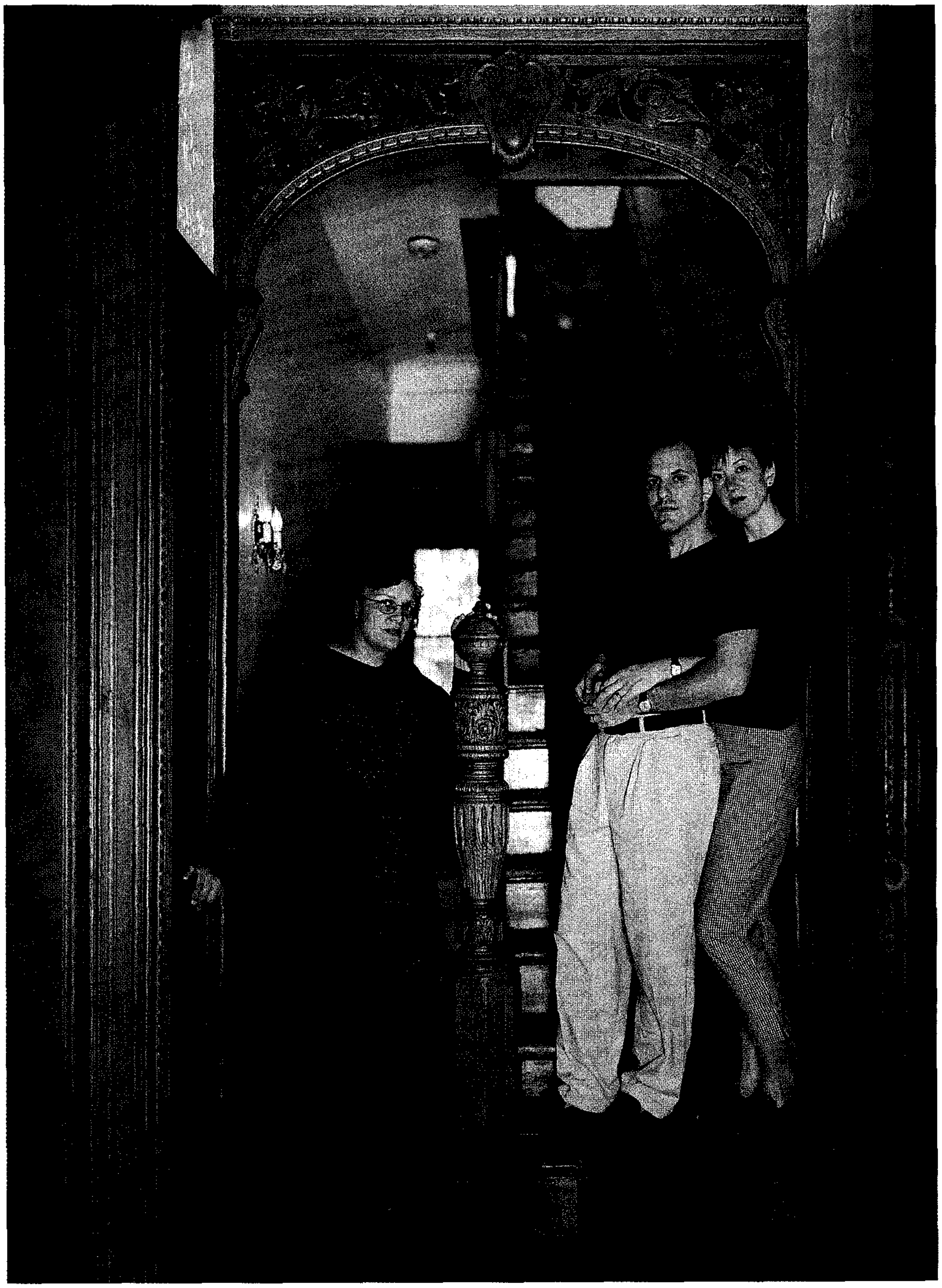
With no shortage of takers. Harlem, which lost 30 percent of its population in the seventies, is gaining residents—for the first time in 50 years. The 2000 census will show central Harlem's population leaping by a stupendous 22 percent since 1990; blacks will account for roughly 80 percent of the neighborhood's population, down from 88 percent at the start of the decade. "The Bradhurst area, which in the eighties had 0.4 percent of households with annual incomes over $50,000, now has 10 percent with incomes over $75,000," says Lionel McIntyre, an associate professor of urban planning at Columbia University. "The increase in real household income in the past decade is at least 10 percent—for *all* of Harlem. This is a major structural shift."

The new crowd is people like Vincent Archer, the 26-year-old son of Detroit's mayor. Archer, a financial consultant at PricewaterhouseCoopers who also runs a networking party for buppies called Black Diamonds, is paying $1,100 a month for a floor-through on West 127th Street. "It feels good to be part of this resurgence," he says, "and I know many young people, not just African-Americans, who want to come to Harlem."

To appeal to future Archers, this summer ground will be broken at Fifth Avenue and 116th Street for Harlem's first "smart apartment building," 128 condos wired with T1 lines. Columbia, long an indifferent neighbor, is now offering forgivable $15,000 loans to employees who buy homes in Harlem.

"The people who we're seeing now were looking in Fort Greene, Brooklyn Heights, Park Slope ten years ago," says Willie Kathryn Suggs, one of Harlem's best-connected brokers and easily its fastest-talking. "But once the prices jumped, they jumped even higher there than they have in Harlem. So Harlem winds up being the cheapest place you can get a whole house for no money, and rising prices bring a different breed of buyer." Suggs has an elastic definition of "no money": Her firm did the record-setting $660,000 deal for Philmore Anderson.

Besides the unfettered market, the other force that's shaking up the neighborhood is a frenzy of city- and state-sponsored residential construction. Walk down Frederick Douglass Boulevard in the West 120s, and your step falls into rhythm with the pounding of dozens of craftsmen's hammers. Since 1994, the city has installed 10,000 people in new Harlem homes. Last month, the city's Housing Preservation and Development agency, in a partnership with the Masjid Malcolm Shabazz mosque, cut the ribbon at the $16.5 million Malcolm Shabazz Gardens on West 117th Street,



STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN Broker Suggs with Amos and Carla Levy at their new Convent Avenue pad.

opening the doors of 41 low-rise limestone-and-brickface three-family homes with subsidized mortgages.

“People forget now what the Upper West Side was or what Park Slope was in the late sixties,” says Jerilyn Perrine, first deputy commissioner of HPD. “They were very different places than they are today, and Harlem shares a lot of the same characteristics. Harlem now has the ability to establish itself as the premier place to live in Manhattan. When we’re looking back from 2030, this will be viewed as a pivotal time.”

“There are questions,” says Benjamin. “But there is so much money being poured into Harlem, and so many people have so much at stake, it cannot fail.”

Yet all the uncritical boosterism rarely admits any of the complexities of the new boom, things that don’t show up on a monthly mortgage statement. Outside the pockets of old-line stability, hundreds of acres of vacant land function only as spacious dog runs. Huge blocks of vacant buildings stand dormant; after sundown, the empty tenements, with their plywood-filled windows, look like nightmarish Advent calendars.

Many middle-class, long-term residents find themselves blindsided by the new price structure and are resentful. All the old problems haven’t vanished, either. Four years ago, Geoffrey and Nancy Ewing bought a brownstone on 143rd Street near Broadway, and the TV actors and their three kids are still waiting for the vaunted crime crackdown to reach their corner of the 30th Precinct. “My theory,” Geoffrey Ewing says, “is that when the white people move in, then the cops will start cleaning this place up. It happened in Brooklyn, it happened in some parts of Harlem, and it’s gonna happen here. *White people in danger! Send out the cavalry!*”

Ewing laughs at the image, but some people are uneasy. Race and real estate are the two most fraught topics in this city, and they’re overlapping in complex new ways uptown. “Do these interviews in ten years, and Harlem might not be an African-American neighborhood,” says Sydney Kai Inis, a designer who lives on Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard at West 116th Street. “In 2010, Harlem might be the Fort Greene of Manhattan. Hopefully, more African-Americans who have the means will come to Harlem and buy, because that would be a hard pill to swallow.”

THE COLOR THAT’S PRODUCING the tensest moments, however, isn’t white but green. As in money.

Vesta Callender steps down from the front passenger seat of a gleaming Ford van and into her past. “Look to your right, and you’ll see 226 West 138th, where at one time I lived,” Callender says. “I was in college, going to Hunter, a brave adolescent who left home and rented space.”

The scent of a sweet business deal is what has brought her back to Striver’s Row. She’s an African-American psychotherapist who lives in Greenwich, Connecticut. “I said I would return to Harlem when they had a Starbucks,” Callender says, “and now they do.” Her comportment, however, is more high-tea than mochaccino. She recoils when invited to step inside a glorious burned-out wreck on West 130th Street.

Leading Callender and her thirtysomething daughter, Jillian, on a tour today is Realtor Yvonne Maddox, whose midtown-based firm, Charles H. Greenthal, recently opened an office steps from the Apollo Theater. Maddox stands in the middle of West 138th Street narrating an architectural history. “Striver’s Row has held its value through the years,” she says. “You’re in the shadows of City College here, and many surrounding blocks are now considered livable—”

“Livable!” snaps a gruff voice. “This is all livable!” A man carrying grocery bags and wearing a ragged satin University of Louisville jacket inserts himself into the conversation.

Maddox tries to ignore the man. “You see here from the signs on the gates, this is where they walked their horses back to the carriage houses. Now those are garages, and they’re quite nice.”

“Yeah,” the man says, “if you’re a jailbird and you’re used to the five-by-seven.”

“Let’s go over here,” Maddox says, quickening her step.

Callender is several paces behind and comes clicking up on high heels just as the guy with groceries climbs a stoop and unlocks the front door. “I been living here 30 years, right?” he shouts.

“Excuse me?” Callender trills.

“My father was—”

“Would you like to sell your house for a song?” Callender interrupts. Everyone freezes. “Would you like to sell your house?”

The guy is speechless. Finally he tilts his head back and flicks the fingers of his right hand along his neck and out from under his chin, a gesture understood in any neighborhood.

“Oh!” says the startled Callender. “That wasn’t a very nice response!”

“Well, it’s an *appropriate* response!” the man spits.

By the end of her two-hour tour, Callender hasn’t found anything she’s interested in. Maddox promises to redouble her efforts on Callender’s behalf, but she isn’t lacking for hungry clients. “The biggest problem is to keep and get inventory,” she says. “Things turn over so quickly, you’re struggling all the time to find the houses to sell.” Beneath the economic pressures that are making Harlem a viable option, Maddox, who grew up in Lubbock, Texas, sees a hopeful social trend at work as well. “The young kids who are moving here don’t have the myths that their parents might have had, or my parents,” Maddox says as her van inches down 125th Street, passing black teenagers checking out the new billboard for rapper Beanie Sigel. “They’ve been going to school with these kids.”

IMANI BENNETT HAS SEEN HARLEM through two sets of eyes. She’s been a pioneering homeowner, buying a building twenty years ago on a rugged patch of St. Nicholas Place near 152nd Street, renovating the four-story dwelling, and reaping the profits when she sold it in 1997. “My house has turned over twice,” Bennett says. “I sold it to a white family, and the African-Americanness of the neighborhood—it was a little too much, they didn’t like it. It wasn’t a block I would have recommended to them. They came from the Upper West Side, and their kids weren’t able to meet other private-school kids in the neighborhood.”

Bennett has also watched the big picture through her job as a vice-president for commercial services at Fleet Bank, one of the lenders that’s taken the lead in underwriting Harlem's redevelopment. "In essence, it is an African-American neighborhood, and it will remain that," Bennett says. "The current wave is having some demographic impact, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Mostly it's African-Americans of means who are coming in."

> "We keep coming across illustrators, filmmakers, musicians who live in Harlem," says UBO's Cooper. "To have access to that talent is a huge advantage."

From her vantage point, Sydney Inis isn't so sanguine. Each morning, she stands drinking her coffee and gazing out an enormous picture window overlooking the corner of Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard and 116th Street. "There's a lady, Mabel, who sits out here, four years, at this light pole in the middle of the median," Inis says. "I don't know what her mental illness is. She's the toughest little nail I've ever seen. Mabel is no kid; she's gotta be older than me, and I'm 42. She's been arrested a couple of times, but this is her spot—winter, summer, snow, storm. I've pulled back on giving her money, because she's admitted to me her crack addiction. But I give her water, food, talk to her. It's hard to look at her, but she's really my touchstone."

In the coming gentrification, Inis worries not simply about the homeless, but about the fate of Harlem's common folk. "I don't think it's just going to be a smooth transition," she says. "There has to be some thought put into the people who can't afford to stay in Harlem, what's going to happen to them. The Caucasians and Europeans and Asians who are moving in, you're going to be the scapegoat, because you're taking something away from people."

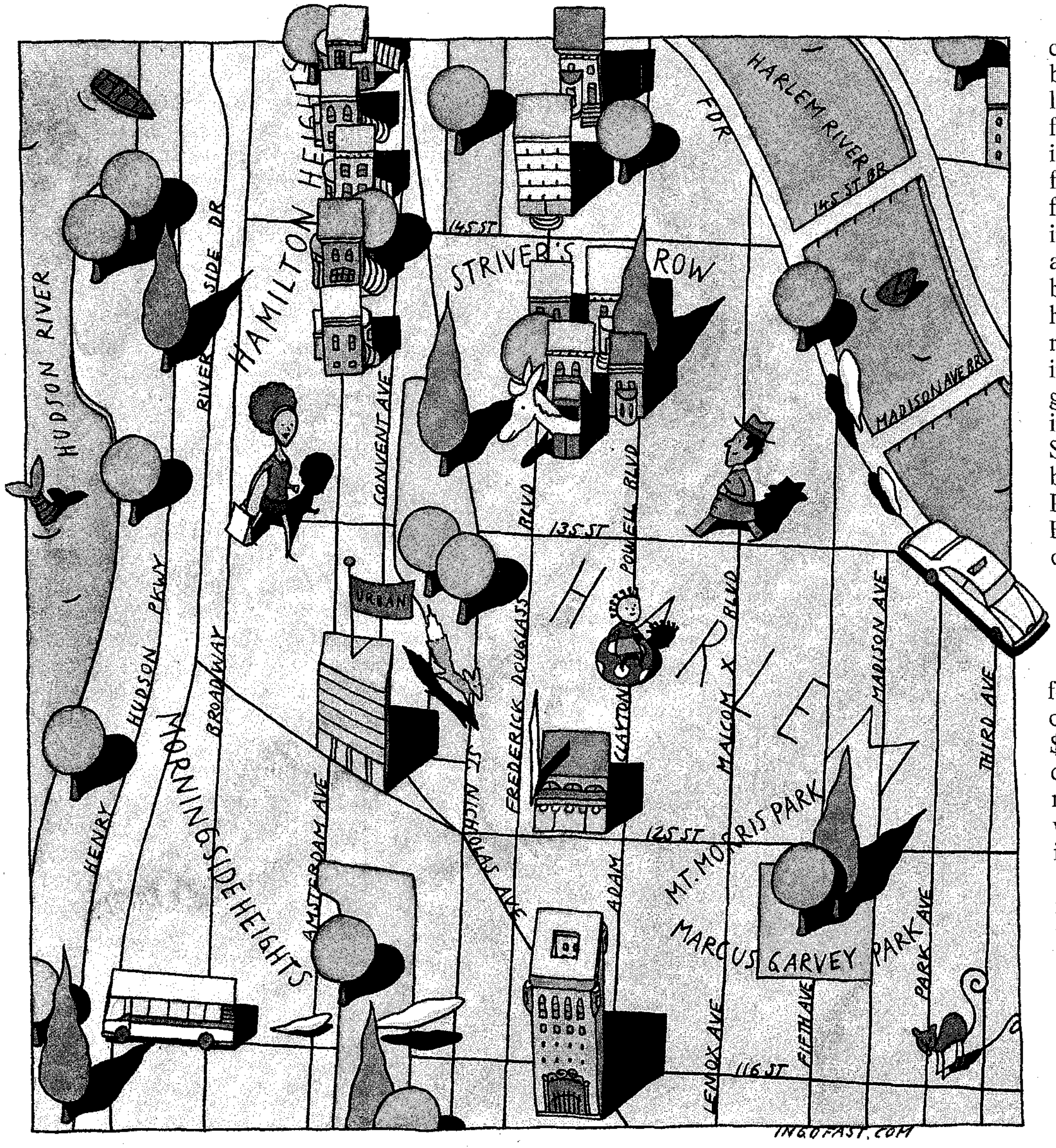
Inis means this as a matter-of-fact, real-world observation. She's a freelance fashion and photo stylist who rents at Graham Court, a stone-arched, steel-gated cousin to the Dakota, and she's turned her airy apartment into a breathtaking eight-room advertisement for her considerable talents. Inis is no bleeding-heart liberal; her humanitarian impulse to invite Mabel inside her apartment competes with her worldly tastes. "We've got more fried chicken, fried pork chops, sweet potatoes, blah, blah, blah in Harlem, like that's all we eat!" she says. "Try to get some mesclun, some arugula, a *beet*! Try to get some soup that's not goat-infested! I would like to have soup and salad across 110th Street. Black people eat soup and salad!"

Inis moved to Graham Court fourteen years ago, when more than half the apartments were vacant and crack and heroin dealers prowled the hallways. Now the courtyard mailboxes carry names like Danny Glover and Quincy Troupe alongside those of pensioners, and rumors of co-op conversion swirl.

"Five years ago, I could have bought a house in Harlem, but not now," Inis says. "I can't afford it. And I'm basically middle-class. Unless you're upper management and making close to $300,000, I don't think anyone else can afford it, either. Because a shell on 119th Street went for $250,000. And I'm talking about no roof, no windows."

She's determined, however, not to let this boom pass her by completely. "I'm a social character, and I know lots of folks in Harlem, so I hear about things," Inis says. "I'm always looking for my little niche, so I went three months ago and got a real-estate license. Now if I hear about a house, I need to sell it."

ABOVE THE TREE-LINED Eternally desirable Hamilton Terrace.



IN 1990, MOVIE PRODUCER GEORGE Jackson used Graham Court as the all-too-believable setting for a crack factory in *New Jack City.* Ten years later, a company Jackson co-founded is just as keenly capturing the moment: Urban Box Office Network is the first major Internet business to move its headquarters to Harlem.

Jackson died suddenly in February at the age of 42, but his partners have just signed a lease for 100,000 square feet at 126th Street and Amsterdam Avenue, where commercial space is 40 percent cheaper than in Silicon Alley. The company expects to move its 300 employees uptown by the end of the year. UBO creates and distributes music, video, and chat targeted at a market it calls "the urban mindset."

"We do a lot of animation that we stream over the Internet," says UBO president Frank Cooper. "We just keep coming across illustrators, writers, filmmakers, musicians who happen to live in Harlem, and to have access to that talent pool is a huge advantage for UBO. About 20 percent of our employees live in Harlem already, and they say it's getting tough to find apartments."

UBO's employees are exactly the people Ibo Balton is after. Today Balton, HPD's director of planning for Manhattan, steps out of his battered city-issue sedan on Frederick Douglass Boulevard near West 121st Street, opposite the brick bones of a mini–Flatiron Building. Officially called Triangle Court, it rotted for twenty years. Then the Housing Development Corporation, an offshoot of HPD, sold it to private developers with the provision that some apartments be set aside for lower-income residents.

Now the Triangle's gracious red stone façade has been sandblasted, and it is the leading edge of an astonishing four-block resurrection. Work is rapidly heading to a May finish on the Triangle and four larger city-owned buildings directly to the south; two adjacent privately owned buildings, also being rehabbed, bring the total to 196 new apartments. Balton steps inside 2210 Frederick Douglass, a grand five-story building between 119th and 120th Streets, accompanied by the beaming private developers, Robert Ezrapour and Eytan Benjamin. Benjamin points out where they'll be installing microwave ovens; the kitchen wine racks and Internet wiring are already in place. This 1,100-square-foot apartment, ready for June occupancy, will rent for $1,400. What kind of tenants does Balton expect in the market-rate units? "People with American Express cards in their wallets," he says.

Balton, long before any real-estate agents were spinning this neighborhood as "north Manhattan," saw the Triangle as a critical architectural and philosophical bridge between Harlem's two redevelopment poles. One extreme is the government-intensive triage that's reclaimed a block of West 140th Street, with the city spending $50 million gut-renovating devastated tenements before recruiting private landlords, who are required to take on some low-income tenants. At the other pole is the naked capitalism fueling prices on brownstone blocks like those of Convent Avenue.

The Triangle and its neighbors are supposed to hold the crucial center. While Balton rattles out public-policy theories about the collateral benefits of market-rate housing, his colleague Luis Ramos leans over and tells me, "None of this would be happening if Ibo hadn't saved the Triangle Building—twice."

The Buildings Department had scheduled meetings between the collapsing Triangle and a wrecking ball. Now Benjamin, the developer, stands beside the wondrously reimagined property and pre-

ILLUSTRATION BY INGO FAST

GUT FEELING Ibo Balton, of HPD, at Triangle Court.

dicts a surplus of applicants. Never mind the still-pitiful supply of consumer services in Harlem. "Who needs a video store?" he says. "Kozmo.com delivers above 110th Street!"

Still, Benjamin will admit to a few qualms. "Anytime a new territory is being developed, there are questions," he says. "But there is so much money being poured into Harlem, so many people have so much at stake, it cannot fail."

FOR HARLEM VETERANS WITH A sense of history, all of the activity, all of the heady pronouncements, begin to take on a certain eerie déjà vu quality. The cover of this very magazine asked, CAN HARLEM BE BORN AGAIN?—in November 1984. Back then, a white lawyer who'd renovated a five-story Mount Morris Park brownstone was the poster boy for gentrification. The Koch administration was puffing up its low- and middle-income housing schemes. And Percy Sutton smilingly perched under the Apollo marquee, promising the theater's imminent return to glory.

No one saw a national recession and a crack plague on the horizon. Those two blows helped knock the foal's legs out from under Harlem's mid-eighties revival. What's different this time? Alan Greenspan, for one thing. But HPD's middle-class-ownership mantra is also a major change in approach.

"The typical profile of somebody buying one of our homes is a family with a household income of $50,000 or $60,000," says HPD's Perrine. "With homeownership, there's not only positive effects on the families themselves—they do better on every scale, from rates of teenage pregnancy to years of education, and it's an incredibly powerful way to build wealth for poor families—but it has some positive effects on the community as well. Harlem is the most important African-American community we've got in America, and it really needs to be preserved and treasured."

The state is in on the act as well, through its Harlem Community Development Corporation. Its most dramatic work will be on Mount Morris Park West, where nine decaying brownstones were abandoned in the late seventies. All that's left is ghostly steel girders, brownstone fronts, and garbage dumped by passing cars. Disgusted neighbors, most of whom live in adjacent, still-stately homes, dubbed the site "The Ruins." This spring, the HCDC will finally haul away the mess and rebuild.

"The other thing that's important about this project is that it doesn't have a subsidy," says Diane Phillpotts, the state agency's Harlem head. "These will be market-rate units, with apartments selling from $155,000 to $210,000. That's one of the things that is exciting—there really are people in Harlem who are middle-income who are eager to buy market-rate units."

Underlying all of Phillpotts's construction work is a political agenda set by Governor Pataki's office. "Housing is one of the public-policy areas where, without spending a lot of public dollars, we can really change fundamentally the way Harlem operates. For the better," Phillpotts says. "If this and the other housing initiatives work as they should, it will have a transformative effect on Harlem for at least a generation. And probably several beyond."

Balton, for one, is ready for those effects. He's rented on West 127th Street for eight years. His voice, normally crisp and ebullient, turns weary recounting the degrading day-to-day hassles inflicted on Harlem's working, taxpaying middle class. "People in other parts of the city laugh when I get all worked up about a Duane Reade opening in my neighborhood," he says. "But chain drug stores, clothing stores, supermarkets are common anywhere else. I'm 45 years old. I'm ready to live in the real world, where you don't have to search to buy toilet paper.”

AL SHARPTON IS ALWAYS A tough act to follow. Inside the Apollo, at February's Democratic presidential debate, he lobbed the first question at Al Gore and Bill Bradley. The subject was straight out of the traditional black-activist playbook, about the police shooting of Amadou Diallo.

But the second, unfamiliar man to step to the mike had a query that revealed much about the mindset of Harlem's new generation: What, asked William Allen, did Gore and Bradley think of the fact that a minuscule 6 percent of Harlem's residents own their own homes, a rate that's less than a fifth of the citywide percentage and the lowest for any major black community in the country?

Gore and Bradley made sympathetic noises and quickly moved on. Allen, the banty young Democratic district leader for central Harlem—and a renter—is still pondering the problem two weeks later. “When you look at other communities, you find the central question regarding control of the community is ownership of the land,” Allen says. “Look at Chinatown—it's owned by Chinese-Americans. At Borough Park, it's Jewish Americans. But for some reason, Harlem, the mecca of black America, we're in the single digits for local real-estate ownership. It's a real issue.” HPD says the figure is actually 10 percent—but that still leaves Harlem at one third the citywide rate.

> **“I don't buy the fact that we need to wait so that we get the ‘right’ people up here,” says Anderson. “The right people are people who respect Harlem's integrity.”**

Allen's family has been in Harlem since the turn of the nineteenth century. In the seventies, when Allen was a teenager living on West 140th Street, one brother was killed in a drive-by shooting. “Growing up, I had this image of a glorious Harlem past, from listening to my grandparents' stories, and here my childhood was drugs and ugly stuff,” Allen says. “All my friends who were going to college, if they went off to Morehouse or Spelman or Howard, they did not return. I couldn't wait to escape Harlem.”

But a call from Allen's longtime pastor, the Reverend Preston Washington, pulled him back. “He said that if good people came together, a bad place could be made good again, and that he was getting the churches together to make a spiritual commitment. Then he sat down with David Dinkins, who said if he was elected mayor, he'd support them. Dinkins won, and he and Bill Lynch came up with a $200 million budget to revitalize a large section of Harlem called Bradhurst, from 139th to 155th Street, along Frederick Douglass Boulevard. If you were to see that strip before the early nineties—shootings, no middle-class folks, and nobody, black or white, would walk down that street. You go there today, you see homeownership, you can see the sunlight going down the street. It's the most beautiful boulevard street in Harlem.”

A copy of the self-help book *It's About the Money!*, written by the Jesse Jackson father-and-son team, is prominently displayed in Allen's apartment, and he endorses a similar version of capitalism as empowerment tool. But Allen is alarmed at how the state and city are allocating tens of millions of dollars. “If you're gonna use government money, it should not be to create market-rate housing,” Allen says. “Government money is supposed to help the many—not the few. Without a place for the middle class, this community becomes like an Upper East Side, where you have a lot of rich people and no one really involved in neighborhood issues.”

Allen didn't expect Gore or Bradley to offer any solutions at the debate, and he had a larger audience in mind anyway. “When people hear that 6 percent of real estate in Harlem is black-owned—and particularly white people need to hear it—then the problems this neighborhood faces become real to them,” Allen says. “Homeownership is a primal part of the American dream. And when black people feel they cannot reach a part of the American dream, then we're all in trouble. Sharpton, while I'm proud of him in many ways, has not talked about what we should be doing in our own communities. There's no equivalent to Floyd Flake in Harlem. Imagine if we had a Floyd Flake! Then the middle class could have some security about their future in the neighborhood.”

PHILMORE ANDERSON SOLD HIS house on Convent Avenue, but he wasn't about to leave Harlem completely. He bought a house in the Hamptons and a two-bedroom co-op at 111th Street and Riverside Drive. “It was more difficult this time to find a place in the city,” he says. “It was sticker shock. What I paid for this house on Convent Avenue is the same as what I'm paying for a two-bedroom that would fit into this floor!”

Besides voting with his own checkbook, Anderson has been an aggressive one-man Harlem chamber of commerce. “I believe the regentrification process is not about just investing in Harlem. It's about bringing people to Harlem that are of all walks of life,” Anderson says. “So the diversity, whether it's socioeconomic or race, religion—a diverse neighborhood is really what regentrifies a place. We wanted to take a more proactive role, so as a result, six or seven of my friends have either moved up here or bought up here. They got tired of listening to me, and said, ‘Awright, I'm moving, I'm moving!’ ”

Anderson, though, has a few parting words of advice for the Levys and all the other newcomers.

“Respect the culture and the history, maintain the Dance Theater of Harlem, the Harlem Boys Choir, our church establishment, the jazz legacy, the authors and poets—protect all of that, and never let people forget what that community represents. But there's plenty of room,” he says. “There's plenty of abandoned buildings that need to be regentrified, that do not encroach on any race or religion. I don't buy the fact that we need to wait so that we get the ‘right’ people up here. The right people are people who respect Harlem's integrity and want to embellish it and let the world see that Harlem is back to its original grandeur.”

After two weeks in Harlem and her first community board meeting, Carla Levy is sounding right at home. “I was interested to see if we would be rejected by anybody, like, ‘Oh, yeah, here you come, now that it's getting expensive.’ But it hasn't happened,” she says. “People aren't idiots. If their property values are going up, they know that's a good thing.” ■

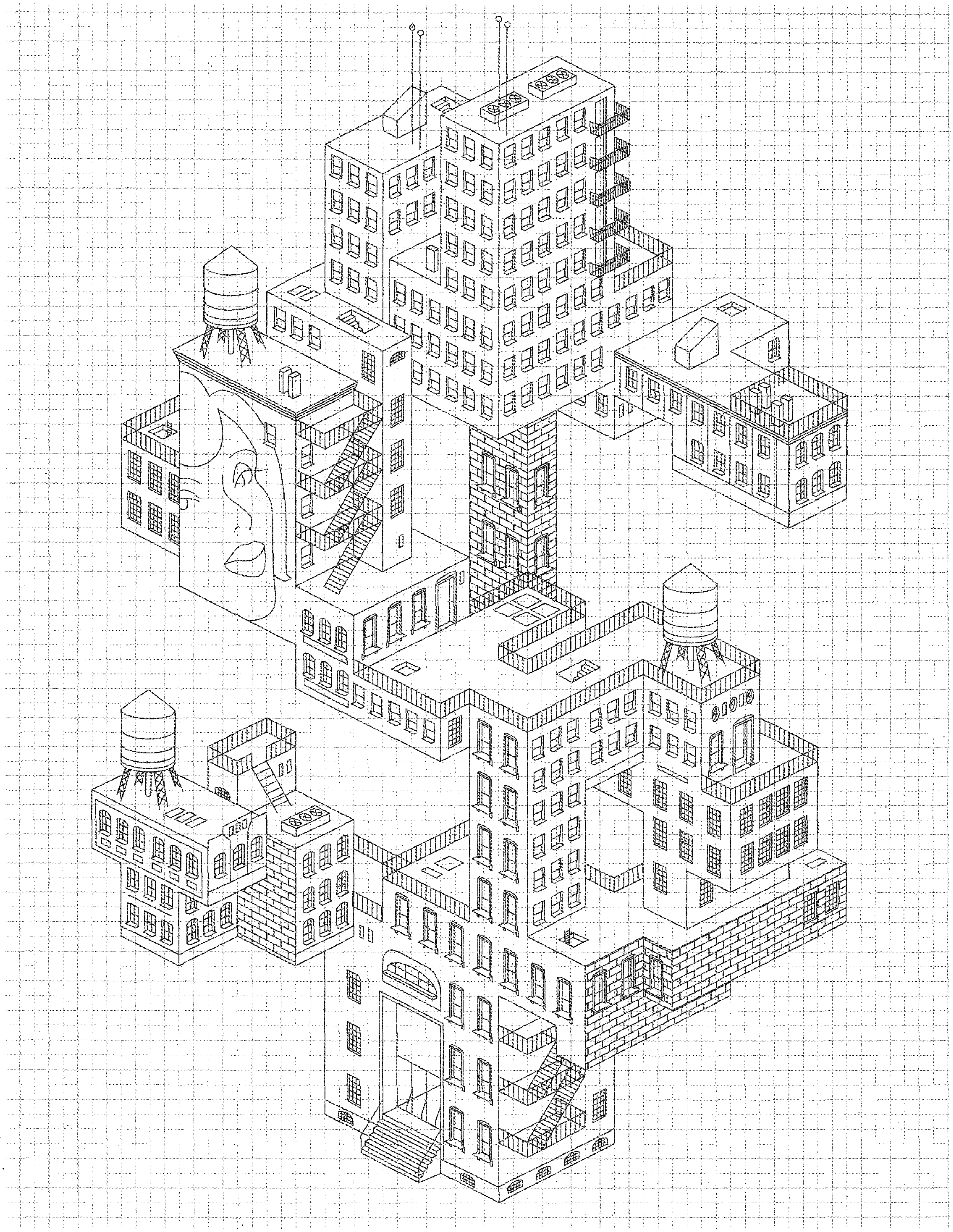


ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

MONDO**CONDO**

Why some of New York's richest people are throwing off the tyranny of co-op boards and migrating to a new world of ultra-luxe, ultra-expensive condominium buildings. **BY RALPH GARDNER JR.**

THE BROKERS FOR THE FISCHER MILLS BUILDING, a former nineteenth-century coffee, tea, and spice emporium on Greenwich Street in TriBeCa currently being transformed into luxury condominiums, admit that Apartment 3D doesn't show very well. To reach it, one must climb a slippery gangplank covered in sawdust and then squeeze through a hole in the wall.

Nonetheless, dozens of potential buyers have signed the release form—liberating the owners of liability lest one of the building's original and lovingly preserved rough-hewn timber columns drops on somebody's head—and donned hard hats to walk the plank for a peek at the future 2,700-square-foot four-bedroom apartment.

"That's the best example of exactly what the market's like right now," explains Richard Wallgren, a broker with Stribling Wells & Gay. "We've had grandmothers and pregnant mothers going up the plank."

Once upon a time, say ten years ago, condominiums were the social misfits of Manhattan's real-estate market—especially among New Yorkers with the bank accounts and bluestocking connections to pass the right co-op boards. The floor plan of the typical condo had all the panache of a Rikers Island cell block. And, speaking of rap sheets, they were more likely to attract as tenants upscale call girls, former presidents-for-life of countries on the State Department's embargoed list, or bushy-tailed yuppies fresh out of business school than *Social Register* families one would hope to rub shoulders with at the Metropolitan Museum's annual children's gala.

But all that's changing. Condos have suddenly become chic, with such boldface new tenants as Bronfman, Boardman, Bowie, Nederlander, and Murdoch, not to mention a battalion of dot-com billionaires. They're now flooding buildings such as 515 Park Avenue, the Zeckendorfs' take on prewar glamour; 15 East 69th Street, the ex–Westbury Hotel presided over by its former concierge; and 838 Fifth Avenue, the former LOVE THY NEIGHBOR home of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, where developers A. Alfred Taubman and his son-in-law Louis Dubin are now pursuing less spiritual goals with apartments that start at $9 million. Even Donald Trump's golden shaft, the Trump International Hotel & Tower at 1 Central Park West, attracted record prices last year, and such tenants as Johnson & Johnson heiress Libet Johnson.

The amount of money sloshing around out there and being sponged up by real estate is simply unprecedented. At 515 Park Avenue, eight apartments sold for more than $10 million each last year—more than all the $10 million–plus sales in the city's entire co-op market the year before.

At 838 Fifth Avenue, still crisscrossed with scaffolding, Seagram heir Charles Bronfman paid a rumored $18 million for the future duplex penthouse. The building's maids' rooms, thoughtfully located on the ground floor to free up more closet space in the average 5,500-square-foot apartment, cost $500,000 each. "We had seven, and they've been snapped up," reports Bret Bobo, 838's sales director.

And at the former Westbury Hotel, where tenants such as Terry Allen Kramer and D. Dixon Boardman can pick up the phone and find concierge Anthony Pike on the other end, a lively market has developed before the building even officially opened—not in sales but in resales.

"Everyone closed on them and resold them for a million-dollar profit in a few days," says real-estate agent Michele Kleier, referring to $3.5 million Westbury apartments that resold for around $4.5 million each.

Slightly behind these ziggurats to conspicuous consumption both pricewise and in terms of location stand such luxe postmodern condominium skyscrapers as the Chatham, the Empire, and the Millennium, where a $2 million apartment is considered bottom-feeding.

"It's like a frenzy of piranha out there," observes real-estate lawyer Ted Kaplan. "I got three calls last week from brokers who said, 'We are desperate for anything. We have people who will go up to $6 million, and we can't show them anything.' "

The most obvious allure of condos is economic. They're a form of currency almost as easily convertible as cash. Unlike in a co-op, where the seller is at the whim of his or her board of directors, a condo board can do little to prevent a sale except to exercise its "right of first refusal" and buy the apartment itself. In any case, the seller makes his or her buck.

Then there are the amenities. At 610 Park, the former Mayfair Hotel, you can get home-cooked meals, that is if home were a Rothschild château and the chef, Daniel Boulud of Daniel, conveniently located in the building's lobby. Wine cellars in many of these buildings have become as common as doorknobs. (Does anybody *not* have a

.COM AND GET IT Dolly Lenz recently sold a $12.5 million spread to an "Internet baby" at Trump International.

personal collection of Château d'Yquem these days?) And 838 Fifth boasts a "four-pipe system" whose splendor escapes me no matter how many times it's explained but which is apparently unprecedented in apartment construction and allows a family member to turn up the heat in one room while another runs the air-conditioning in the rest of the house. "There's never been a building built to these specs," Bret Bobo gloats. "People are moving out of co-ops in the neighborhood into this."

Perhaps most attractive of all, prospective buyers more often than not don't have to undergo the financial colonoscopies that have become standard operating procedure with most of the city's co-op boards.

I'M ALWAYS SAYING TO MYSELF, I'M going to move to a condo," explains etiquette guru Charlotte Ford, whose Sutton Place penthouse is plagued by leaks. "Because to get into an apartment today is ridiculous. The way the boards function—ridiculous."

"We have a balcony that goes all the way around this vast apartment," reports a credentialed socialite who moved from a sprawling Carnegie Hill townhouse into the Gotham, a condo on 87th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues. "There's a fantastic Olympic pool that nobody's ever in, and a state-of-the-art gym downstairs with trainers waiting to show you how to use the weight machines. The subway's right outside the door. I've gone downtown a couple of times on it."

Nonetheless, she and her husband are renting, and he won't let her buy. "It's not where he would end up," she states, choosing her words carefully. "It's too modern, too nouveau—not that he has anything against that."

Whatever the drawbacks of the cooperative screening process, it does provide comfort for those who make the grade. "They feel they have a sense that the people they're going to meet in the building, the gym, and the elevator or whatever are safe, nice families that somebody has vetted," explains socialite Jamee Gregory. "And the part of that that's nicest is that you know it's not just about money."

Buying a condo, especially in this market, is unequivocally about money. Dolly Lenz, senior vice-president of Sotheby's International, recently sold an "Internet baby" a three-bedroom $12.5 million apartment at Trump International. According to her calculations, that comes out to $3,833 a square foot. "They saw it for ten seconds and bid way over the ask." Contracts were signed in one day.

"They're willing to overpay to get what they want," she says, speaking of the e-zillionaires in general. "They *know* they're overpaying. I advise them it's 50 percent more than anybody ever paid for this apartment, and they're fine with it."

At 515 Park, stratospheric transactions take place without a single tax return's changing hands. "We asked for a reference letter," explains Will Zeckendorf, who developed the building with his brother Arthur. "If Merrill Lynch wrote and said, 'Mr. So and So has over $50 million in liquid assets with us,' we didn't pry into tax returns."

IF THERE'S ANYTHING MORE amazing than the prices the rich are willing to pay, it's the faith they have in the good taste of their developers. The young family who mounted Fischer Mills's gangplank and recently bought the apartment for $1.5 million saw more of their future home than most do in this fast-moving market. The model apartment is becoming a thing of the past.

"You are basically looking at finishes, and the rest you are buying from a floor plan," states Kirk Henckels, director of Stribling Private Brokerage.

Indeed, one reason given for the lively resale market even before these buildings open is that the finished product doesn't live up to buyers' expectations and they want to unload them. Or the buyers passed up a chance previously but are so impressed with the finished results that they're willing to pay a premium.

Five-fifteen Park recently showed a thirty-ninth-floor apartment whose view may be the best from any bathtub in Manhattan. Nonetheless, the folks who paid $16 million for it are supposedly changing their minds, reports a broker who toured the apartment. "They didn't like the finishes," she says.

"These people have the kind of money to act on a whim," says Michele Kleier. "You made a mistake, and you return it.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JUSTINE PARSONS

It's like going to Bergdorf's and buying a pair of shoes. They hurt, and you take them back."

PERHAPS THE BEST INDICATION that condos are becoming more socially acceptable is that some condo buildings are starting to cop the same attitude as top-of-the-line cooperatives. The St. Tropez, the city's first condo, built in 1964 at 340 East 64th Street, has passed by-laws forbidding purchasers from renting out their apartments for two years to dissuade those buying only as an investment. At 923 Fifth, board packages sometimes get sat on for months. "The old biddies don't want the new biddies," states a disgruntled broker. And at Olympic Tower, once known as a crash pad for wealthy South Americans and Arabs and where the renovated lobby still leaves something to be desired—"Where do I park my camel?" is how one broker describes the décor—the amount of paperwork the board requires from potential buyers is quickly approaching the foot-thick millstone routinely demanded at cooperatives.

"The boards are getting so tough and picky," sighs real-estate lawyer Ted Kaplan, one of whose clients recently got the runaround at Olympic Tower before being accepted. "It's no longer just 'Show us your first $20 million.' "

One of the city's more fearsome condo boards is said to be that of Bristol Plaza, at 200 East 65th Street, where the developers, the Milstein family, still own the top two floors and a private elevator to take them there. One recent Bristol victim was shock jock Howard Stern, rejected when he tried to buy a $2.7 million apartment on the building's forty-third floor. The board was apparently concerned that the popularizer of "Butt Bongo" would disrupt the condo's "businesslike" ambience, according to a broker familiar with the deal. And so the building exercised its right of first refusal, she says.

Stern eventually found himself a home at a more celebrity-friendly condo—the Millennium Tower, at Broadway and 67th Street, where his neighbors include the Lindas Fiorentino and Evangelista, Regis Philbin, and Elton John's former manager, John Reed. However, Stern paid the price for building a career on the sore backs of stutterers, dwarfs, and lesbian strippers: His penthouse cost a staggering (at least in 1998 terms) $7 million for what his broker describes as "raw space." He spent a few million more to make it habitable.

"The Millennium didn't want him, either," his broker states. "They're so disorganized, they couldn't figure how to keep him out."

DOWNTOWN, THE ONLY APARTMENT THAT'S proved hard to sell is JFK Jr. and Carolyn Bessette's North Moore Street loft. It was on the market for $2.4 million, a price brokers consider too high for the space, especially since equivalent apartments in the building are selling for a million less and Kennedy hadn't done much to put his stamp on the loft. "Anything that had a stitch of his personality was removed," explains one broker. "It has been on the market two to three months, and in this market two to three months is a long time." (It's currently said to be under contract.)

Indeed, if Kennedy were to return today, the surrounding neighborhood would already look a little different. With the possible exception of Times Square, no area of Manhattan is changing as rapidly as TriBeCa, and most if not all the new development is luxury condominiums.

If money is the narrative thread in the condo boom, fun seems to be the back story. Empty-nesters who once wouldn't have ventured below 59th Street without making sure their vaccinations were up to date are now spending gleefully for pied-à-terres in Chelsea and TriBeCa. The reason? Luxury lofts the size of airplane hangars. Young, hip neighbors whose presence confirms the fact that you're happening, too. And restaurants such as Nobu and Chanterelle, which mean you won't starve. So what if TriBeCa still has a supermarket shortage?

"What I find fascinating about TriBeCa is that it's a neighborhood that didn't exist very much ten years ago," Stribling's Richard Wallgren says. "It's exciting to walk down blocks where every building you see that isn't a luxury condo is going to be." Some longtime TriBeCa residents angrily complain that the neighborhood's been hijacked. Susan Bodo is an art dealer who's seen the neighborhood where her kids grew up change from a haven for Birkenstocked baby-boomers to a sort of Colonial Williamsburg for Wall Street hotshots. "I walked into Walkers, our local restaurant, the other day, and there were several tables of these thirtyish people," she says. "The girls all had streaked blonde hair and cell phones."

"The NASDAQ nouveaus don't have a lot of money in the bank but can pay high finance charges and a lot of maintenance," explains Clark Halstead, founder and managing part- *(continued on page 127)*

FORK OVER THE BENJAMINS
Stribling's Kirk Henckels at soon-to-be-super-luxe 140 Franklin.

THE SWEET SELL OF EXCESS

What will they think of next? Heated towel racks, solar panels, e-mail-ready bathtubs, and fireplaces on titanium terraces—mod is in the details in the city's most wanted new buildings. **BY SARAH BERNARD**

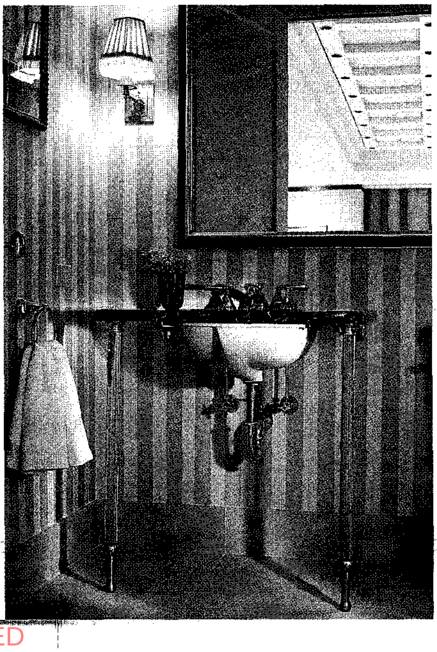
MGM GRANDEUR Future Century Tower screening room.

“IF YOU WANT, YOU COULD PUT A pool up here,” says Landmark Development's Edward Baquero, standing on top of the Loft at 30 Crosby Street, where a roof deck is under construction. In a building where duplex penthouses go for $7 million, tar paper is not an option. Instead, the deck's sides will soon be covered with titanium—inspired by the Bilbao Guggenheim—and its floor tiled with San Cristóbal marble. “It's hard to find that right shade of vanilla with the red veining,” says Baquero, who personally traveled to the Dominican Republic in search of the perfect slab. “It's coming on a ship next week in four containers. You better have it,” he says, reciting the new mantra of New York's high-end developers, “or they don't buy, they don't react.”

At the top end of the New York City housing market, people are willing to pay any price, bear any financial burden, for the cause of a fabulous apartment. But it's got to be truly fabulous. Which means custom faucets and four-star room service, valet parking, cast-iron soaking tubs, and, yes, titanium roof decks. It's a full-scale, no-holds-barred amenities race. “You need to differentiate yourself in a market like this,” explains Andy Gerringer, who heads Douglas Elliman's development-marketing department. “There's Continental breakfast built into the common charges at 308 East 72nd Street. Private libraries at 66 Leonard. They've got heated towel racks at 110 West 17th. Perceived value—that's what all this is about. You learn as you go,” he says. “A lot of people like to hang big pieces of art, so you have oversize elevators when you can. The more little things to hit the hot button, so to speak, the better,” he says. “It's just the game you play.”

These days, developers strategize with their architects and brokers about which indulgences will appeal to their well-researched target markets. “Even with the doorknob, we try to establish a point of view,” says architect and developer John Petrarca of Guenther Petrarca. To play to a hip downtown clientele, fashion photographer Marco Glaviano was hired to snap statuesque models preening in empty, sun-drenched lofts for 30 Crosby's brochure. “Since most units are sold before they're built,” continues Petrarca, “that ‘story’ has become more important.”

For above-60th-Street buyers, typically on the lookout for service-related amenities, that translates into concierge moms, dog walkers, and room service from private restaurants just for residents. “People can always redo the kitchen if they don't like it,” allows Stribling's Kirk Henckels, who handles proper-



PHARAOH FAUCET A Park Laurel sink.

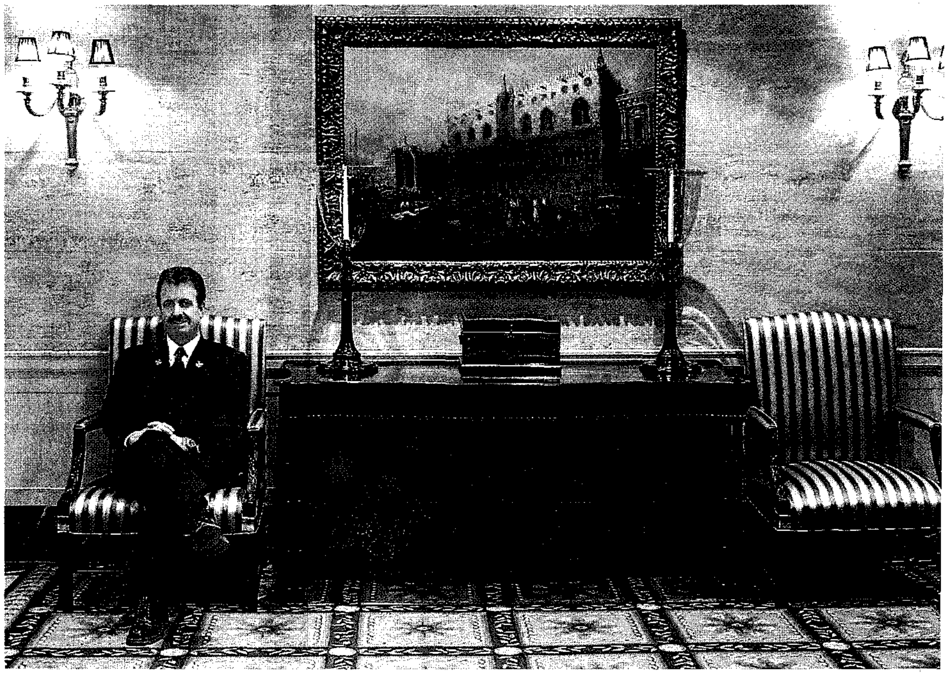
ties with price tags of $3 million and up. Each building tries to stake out its niche. At 838 Fifth Avenue—the "Love Thy Neighbor" building, as it is called for the exhortation etched across its landmarked limestone façade—luxury is the leitmotif. Separate staff suites, a lobby coat-check area, and a surveillance system designed by an official of the U.S. Department of State no doubt helped the penthouse sell for $18 million, even though it won't see its moldings for more than a year. The Park Laurel, at 63rd Street just off Central Park, is billed as "family-friendly," with kids' wings and an emphasis on closet space instead of his-and-her bathrooms. The former Westbury Hotel, at 15 East 69th, has retained Anthony Pike, the hotel's original concierge. Just the other day, a client landing at Kennedy on the British Airways Concorde asked Pike to arrange for his personal jet to meet him at the adjacent gate. "I was able to call a contact of mine at British Airways and had them hold a space in the next jetway so he could walk down the tarmac and onto his plane. He was on his way to Jamaica," Pike explains, "and didn't want to lose any time."

Brand-name chefs are another selling point uptown—Alain Ducasse is opening a restaurant to serve the Essex House—as are floor plans from brand-name architects. David Rockwell is fashioning the lobby and adjacent sitting room at Bridge Tower Place on East 60th. Michael Graves has just unveiled the Century Tower, the latest addition to RFR/Davis's East Side corridor, where residents will be treated to Accompli, a concierge service launching this month that links their buildings' amenities. Besides using it to, say, book a nanny, residents of any Davis development can reserve time in the screening room of the Wellington Tower at 350 East 82nd or in the conference center of the Impala at 76th and First.

Downtown buyers, most often younger professionals with hectic schedules or empty-nest expats from the Upper East Side, want well-designed physical details—they don't have the time or inclination to rip out the GE appliances and start again. And a booming market means buyers can shop around for their particular stylistic sensibility. "One-forty Franklin has this European modern look, like a sophisticated European hotel," explains James Lansill, director of development for Stribling Marketing Associates. Franklin Tower, the sleekly renovated Deco office building at 90 Franklin Street developed by RAL Associates and designed by Petrarca, has everything from recessed night-lights to a new line of Waterworks hardware in the bathroom, stainless-steel countertops from Boffi, and customizable Poliform closet systems. Not surprisingly, Mariah Carey, Ben Stiller, even Bob Vila will soon call it home. Those with an environmental conscience may be lured by five townhouses Petrarca is developing himself on nearby Reade Street with geothermal wells for energy-efficient heating and cooling. (Water from the wells travels into the house and heats or cools it through pipes in the floors.) One even boasts a solar panel, so its residents could conceivably never have to pay an electric bill. Provisions have been made for each to have its own Web address (www.156reade.com, for example) run on a server in the basement. "Now we're looking into wireless," says Petrarca, musing on his forthcoming design project, another RAL conversion at 270 Broadway, "so you can sit in the bathtub and read your e-mail."

COOL INTENTIONS Franklin Tower's Boffi kitchen.

An even more flamboyant offering, however, comes with Lansill's next effort. Denizens of penthouses at 21 Astor Place can live out their Batman fantasies as they pull into a private remote-controlled garage and onto mechanical tracks. At that point, they can get out—and watch their Range Rovers as they seem to "drive" themselves into an elevator and thence to basement parking spaces. It's an extra chauffeurs will certainly applaud.



MR. MOM Westbury concierge Anthony Pike.

Until 21 Astor is up and running (automotive enthusiasts won't move in until early 2001), Baquero's 30 Crosby, which goes on sale this week, is downtown's current winner in the signifier sweepstakes. In addition to the Bilbao borrowings, there are wood-burning fireplaces *outside* on the penthouses' terraces, wide "rain" showerheads, a "smart garbage" recycling system that automatically sorts paper and plastic, Bosch appliances, bamboo gardens in back, and a wine cellar–tasting room where residents can store at least 1,000 bottles of their favorite vintages or dine around a farmhouse table in front of yet another fireplace. Baquero is so captivated by the masterpiece he's created that he's thinking of moving in himself. "We didn't have to do this," he says, on his way down the half-finished stairs to where designer Benjamin Noriega-Ortiz's retro-futuristic lobby will shortly materialize. "Honestly, I think we're a little nuts. But you exceed people's expectations," he says, "and that's how you win the game." ■

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KENNETH CHEN

THE NEXT BEST THINGS

Not since Robert Moses have there been so many large-scale building projects in the pipeline. Eight blueprints that stand to alter the city's genetic makeup.

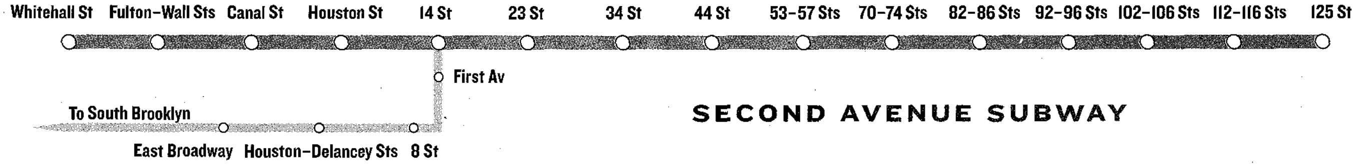
BY PEGGY EDERSHEIM KALB

"WE HAVE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES RIGHT NOW, and they're ours to blow, in the great New York tradition," says Kent Barwick, head of the Municipal Art Society. In today's tropical real-estate climate—with hawkish community groups agitating for more parks and real-estate tycoons displaying expansionist tendencies—blowing it hardly seems likely. The new Penn Station stands to open up the far West Side in midtown. The redeveloped Con Edison site in the East Thirties could mean a new neighborhood—"MOBER" (midtown over by the East River), anybody? Columbus Centre, on the site of the old Coliseum, could reconnect lower Broadway to the Upper West Side. The city's waterfronts could be transformed by new subway lines, shuttling New Yorkers to parts of the city that have effectively been noncontenders for eons. And parks on a scale unheard of since the reign of Robert Moses could give the city's asphalt and concrete a sorely needed wash of chlorophyll. It's the largest land grab the city has seen in 50 years.

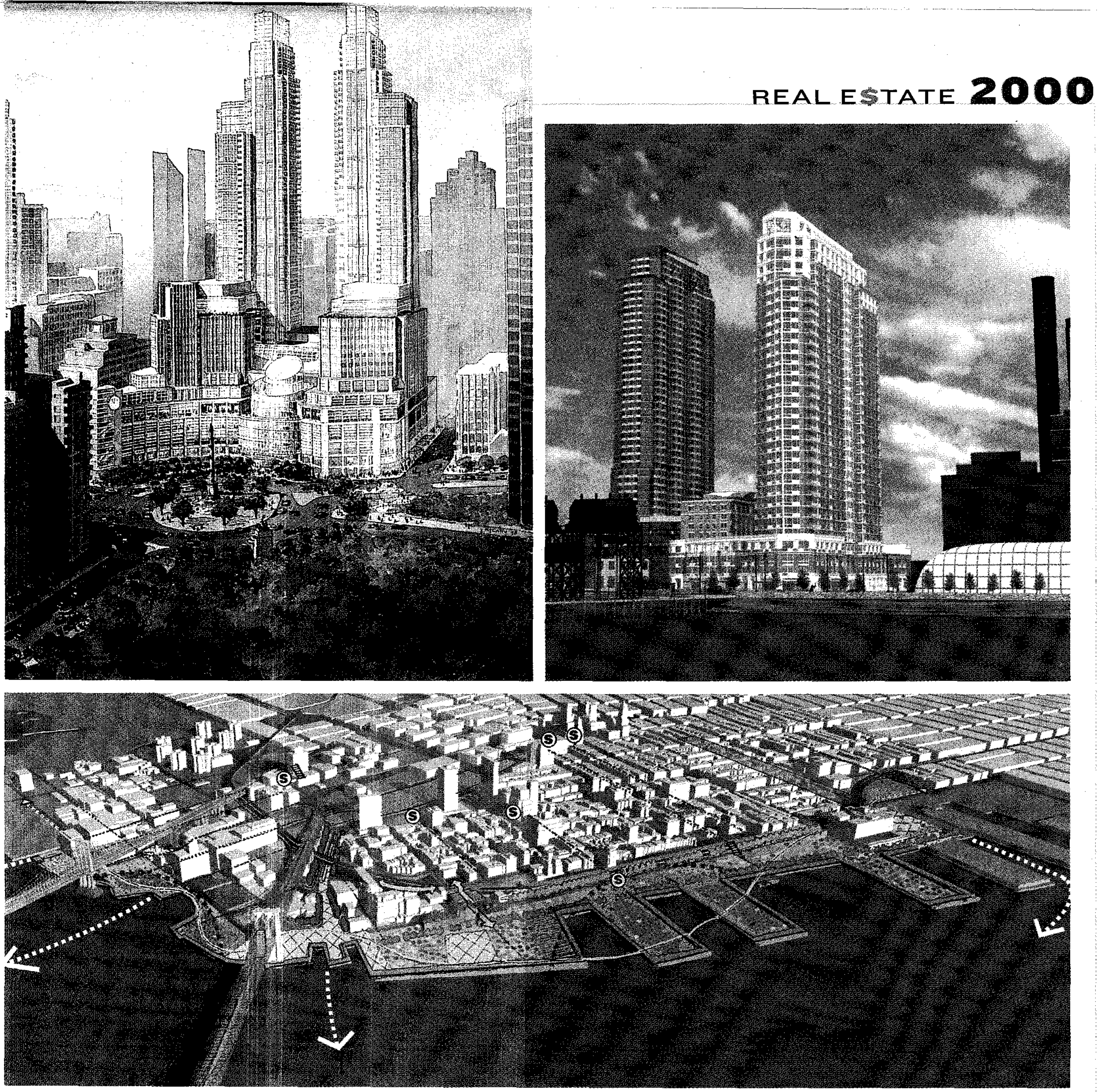
1. It's hard to gaze upon Con Edison's hulking Waterside electric-and-steam plant in the East Thirties and see Emerald City. But the giant 4.5-acre power plant and four parcels of land occupying nine acres along the East River recently inspired a fierce bidding war between developers. A partnership formed by the Fisher brothers (known for their high-end office buildings), residential kingpin Sheldon Solow, and Morgan Stanley Dean Witter won out—for a reported $600 million. Whatever the price tag, it will be years before luxury condominiums rise from this dismal stretch of waterfront, which was a slaughterhouse district before Con Ed commandeered it. City-planning commissioner Joseph Rose says he's interested in seeing around 4 million to 5 million square feet of commercial and residential property, with buildings each "in the range of 40 to 50 stories." There should also be public access to the waterfront—an esplanade, perhaps. Community groups are already demanding height limits in the plans.

2. Trump World Tower, at First Avenue and 47th Street, will eventually stand 90 stories high, making it the tallest residential building in the world—and one of the most controversial developments in recent history. Urban planners and neighbors like Walter Cronkite took issue with Donald Trump's $360 million spire near the U.N. when he announced it a year and a half ago, but so far, the courts have said he is within his rights. A happy upshot of the ruckus could be a long-due overhaul of the city's zoning laws—including a cap on the height of buildings throughout most of the city. "Trump World Tower is a good example of a developer seeing how far you can push the zoning ordinance until everyone says *We can't let this happen again,*" says Bob Yaro, executive director of the not-for-profit Regional Plan Association. Still, not everybody's been boycotting the building. "I heard some ambassadors have bought there," says Elizabeth Stribling, head of Stribling & Associates. The 372 apartments are selling for between $700,000 and $13 million; the Trump Organization says the building is already 60 percent sold—even though it won't be fully finished until April 2001.

Brokers say the combination of Trump World Tower and Bridge Tower Place—a 38-story luxury high-rise under construction at First Avenue and 61st Street—should rev up the residential market along First Avenue in the Fifties. Designed by the same architect as Trump World Tower, Bridge Tower Place (a Brodsky Organization project) is shooting up right across the



MAP BY JOHN MARKIC

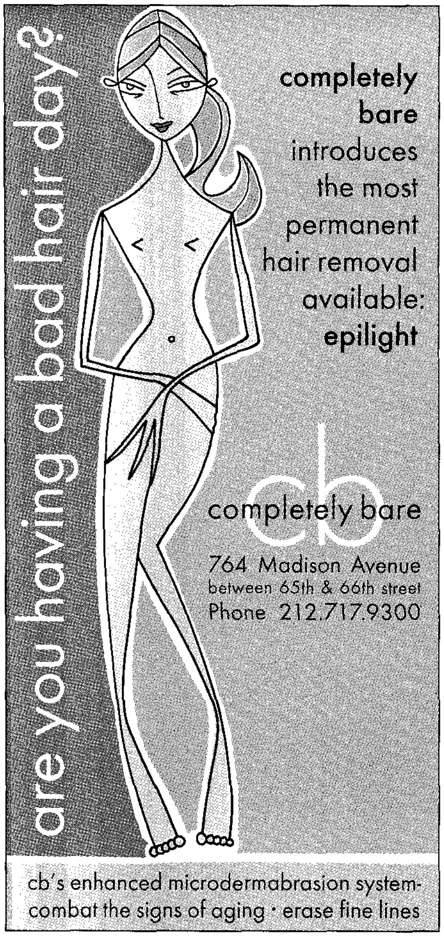


COMING ATTRACTIONS Clockwise from top left, the Columbus Centre is Broadway's future anchor; Queens West will keep the Pepsi-Cola sign company; Brooklyn Bridge Park goes the green mile.

street from the new Bridgemarket under the 59th Street Bridge, where knowing East Siders are checking out the new Terence Conran shop and Conran-run restaurant Guastavino's. A Bed Bath & Beyond and Sports Club/LA nearby are under construction. Traffic brings more traffic, says Marilyn Harra Kaye, owner of Prudential MLBKaye International Realty and a local resident for 25 years. “Nothing was here a few years ago,” says Kaye. “My daughter was never allowed to walk under the bridge alone. But now it's beautiful. Now foreigners want to be near Bridgemarket.”

3. After 50 years of jawboning the issue to death, Manhattan may yet get its Second Avenue subway line, starting at 125th Street and ending at Whitehall Street in the financial district (with a fork near 14th Street that would stop in the East Village). “We have all these new high-tech and financial-services businesses here in the city,” says the subway line's most vocal proponent, State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. “The only way to keep them here is by expanding access to other parts of the city.” The West Side has three lines serving it, but the East Side has just one, leading to chronic overcrowding on the Lexington Avenue line. The Lower East Side and the East Village, especially, have little access to mass transit.

One catalyst for a new subway is the $4.3 billion East River Access, the MTA project championed by Governor Pataki; in the next few years, a tunnel will connect the Long Island Rail Road to the Metro-North line, and both trains will pull into Grand Central Terminal. Long Island commuters will arrive at the train station and pour onto the Lexington line. That's where things get prickly; the MTA proposes that the Second Avenue subway run from 125th Street to 63rd Street, where it would merge with the N and the R lines. But Silver has said he'll hold up the state budget until the Pataki administration commits to building a full-length line. “East River Access means you're going to be bringing in 20,000 to 25,000 people during rush hour without giving



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some relief to the overcrowded Lexington line," says an exasperated-sounding Silver. "It's shortsighted, *very* shortsighted."

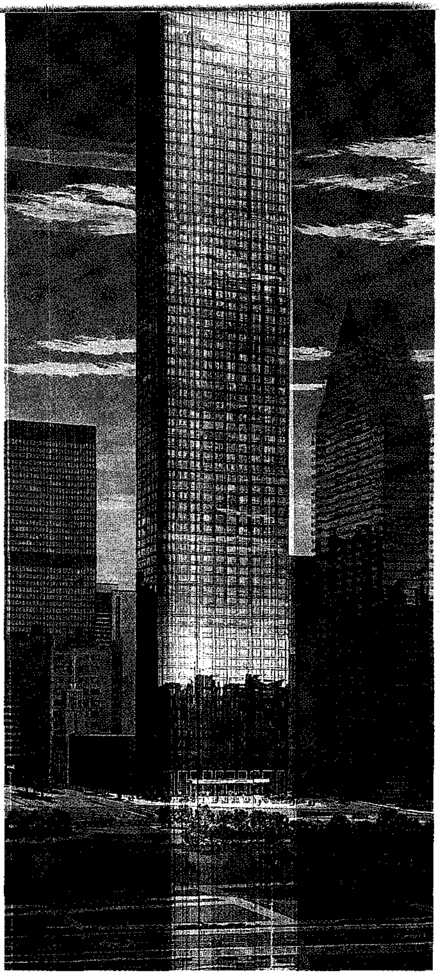
4. "The Farley project is the kernel of what's to come on the West Side," says architect Alexandros Washburn, Senator Moynihan's former public-works adviser and ex-president of the Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation. It was Washburn who spearheaded the plan to convert half the Beaux-Arts James A. Farley Post Office into the new Pennsylvania Station. The Farley Post Office was designed by McKim, Mead and White as the fraternal twin of the original station. It is conveniently situated right across Eighth Avenue from what Senator Moynihan calls "that little hole in the ground"—what's left of the old and still-mourned Penn Station. The $600 million project, designed by Skidmore Owings & Merrill, is how the city will atone for past sins; after all, it was the destruction of the original Penn Station in 1963 that led to the creation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The new Penn Station, expected to be completed in 2003, will handle an estimated 30 percent increase in traffic by 2020—thanks to a new high-speed link to Boston (and eventually Washington, D.C.), new transit links in New Jersey, and a new rail link to JFK, to be finished in 2004.

Then there are the hotly debated plans for the No. 7 train (which already carries passengers from Grand Central to Times Square) to continue to Penn Station and then on to the Jacob Javits Center. And Metro-North commuters from Westchester may be coming into Penn Station via Amtrak tracks sometime in the future. With talk of expanding the Javits Center—which is dwarfed by rivals in other cities—and the possibility of a new NFL stadium at the site of the West Side rail yards (where Mayor Giuliani's dreams of hosting the Olympics may yet come true, too), transportation is suddenly getting a lot of airtime.

"The Farley building will eventually have an entrance on Ninth Avenue," says Washburn, "a gateway to the west that stands to open up blocks and blocks of undeveloped real estate." In fact, it has already begun to happen, according to Robert A. M. Stern, dean of the Yale School of Architecture. Looking out the window of his West 34th Street Manhattan office at the desolate rail yards, Stern notes that "in this whole area, from the Starrett-Lehigh building at 26th Street to 42nd Street west of Ninth Avenue—where the Lincoln Tunnel comes out—there's a ton of land that's empty or filled with marginal buildings." It's a haven for artists and architecture firms looking for relatively inexpensive studio space; Richard Meier, Gwathmey Siegel, Ian Schrager, and Massimo Vignelli are all in the same building at Tenth Avenue and 36th Street. The largest project now under construction in the area is Larry Silverstein's Riverplace, two residential luxury buildings occupying a full block between 41st and 42nd Streets on Eleventh Avenue. Riverplace will add 1,800 apartments, retail space, and a 34,000-square-foot health club to the neighborhood. "I think [Yale art historian] Vincent Scully had the most wonderful description of today's Penn Station," says Alexander Garvin, a member of the New York City Planning Commission. "He always says that at Penn Station, you scuttle into Manhattan like a rat. A new Penn Station would be a magnet around which the West Side is going to redevelop." Also in the offing: a new and improved Madison Square Garden. Just two weeks ago, Cablevision announced that it will demolish the Garden and rebuild on the same site or in the nearby rail yards.

5. Despite predictions twenty years ago that Long Island City would become the next SoHo, this part of Queens never quite registered with the new bohemians. Instead, it's getting a more traditional kind of makeover: Queens West is fifteen residential and four or five commercial buildings


SHAFT Trump World Tower at United Nations Plaza.

planned for the Long Island City waterfront, an area known as Hunters Point. Starting at the giant red Pepsi-Cola sign, Queens West will eventually occupy 74 acres on the bank of the East River—and 1.25 miles of waterfront. The project was developed by a subsidiary of the Empire State Development Corporation, working in conjunction with a few developers, including the Zeckendorfs.

The first building up is Citylights, a 40-story co-op beside Tennisport's bubble. The next building, tentatively called Avalon Riverview, breaks ground this spring, and the waterfront park that arrived with Citylights should double in size to six acres over the next year, eventually running the 12.8-acre length of the property. "There will actually be waterfront access for the first time in probably a century for Mr. and Mrs. Hunters Point," says Carolyn Bachan, president of the Queens West Development Corporation. Eventually, Queens West stands to usher an additional 13,500 residents into the area. "Every landowner there is dreaming of sugarplums," says Kent Barwick, head of the Municipal Art Society: "*In no time at all, this coast could become a kind of gold coast*—that is, if it's properly planned."

"The view from my thirty-ninth-floor apartment is breathtaking," says Edward Sadowsky, president of the Citylights co-op board and a partner at the Manhattan law firm Blank Rome Tenzer Greenblatt. "Besides, I only have a four-minute commute to my office in the Chrysler Building."

6. "Brooklyn has the least amount of parkland of any county in the state," says Joanne Witty, president of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation. Suddenly, it stands to get some. With the waterfront no longer being used to unload cargo, and the Port Authority piers seeing action as warehousing and parking, an 80-acre greensward seemed hard to argue against. Witty expects to have a draft of a plan for the new park this spring (funded with $2 million from New York State). The 1.3-mile-long property running south from Atlantic Avenue to just past the Manhattan Bridge encompasses Piers 1 through 5 and the Fulton Ferry Landing under the Brooklyn Bridge. Until recently, developer David Walentas, the largest landowner in DUMBO, expected he would build a hotel and marina here. But the city nixed his proposals in December, saying the plans would change the character of the neighborhood (such as it was), block views, and create too much congestion. Local community groups suddenly had more room to push for the park. "It can have chunks of green space and cultural activi-

(continued on page 102)

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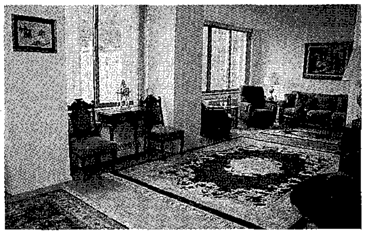
West 19th St. Lovely 2 bedroom/2 bath floor-thru in the "best" neighborhood boasts a fireplace and a private terrace. **Rochelle Bass, 627-3000 x219**

West 90s. 3 bedroom prewar in a fine, full-service building features 17x12 entry gallery, original detail and charm galore! **Janice Stiller, 957-3100 x251**

East 80s. "Designer Deluxe" 1 bedroom/1.5 bath with sunny exposures, fine cabinetry, and elegant-touches everywhere! **Renee Isacoff, 517-9100 x251**



East 30s. Rambling, 3 bedroom/3 bath with 36 foot sun-filled living room, formal dining room and separate library-alcove. **Laurie Scott, 252-1900 x358**

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Brokered Promises

The "no fee" apartment people say it's possible to find a great place without forking over 15 percent. We wanted to see for ourselves.

By Heather Robinson

WHEN YOU TROLL THE *VOICE* classifieds, it seems like the only apartments not already rented by the time you call turn out to be ads placed by "no fee" apartment brokers. *These* apartments are always still available, but before you can look at them you must first come down to the office to register, for a fee ranging from $35 to $200. It seems like a good deal—a broker would charge more than a month's rent. On the other hand, what if the listings turned out to be stale, or completely bogus?

Curious to see whether it was possible to rent a decent apartment sans broker, *New York* tested five of these agencies, including two Websites and an automated telephone service. In each case we signed on like any other customer, pretending to be looking for a one-bedroom in Manhattan, preferably on the West Side in a doorman building, ideally for less than $2,400 a month, with a $2,600 max.

There were no bargains, but we did see plenty of fine apartments that met our standards. Most of these companies build their inventories the same way brokers do, by reaching out directly to landlords. (Only ApartmentSource.com and Rent-direct.com are actually licensed apartment-information vendors; as for the others, the New York Department of State has no records.) And several times during our search we ran into full-service brokers who were showing the very same apartments, clients in tow.

ApartmentSource.com

How it works: For $35 you get to sift through its Internet database. The search engine lets you hunt according to price range, size, location, and desired amenities. For 30 days, you receive daily e-mails with new vacancies (usually three to four, but often as many as six) that meet your specifications.

Results: A whopping 63 apartments met our criteria on the first try. We called fifteen; eight were already taken, but we were able to set up appointments to see five the same afternoon.

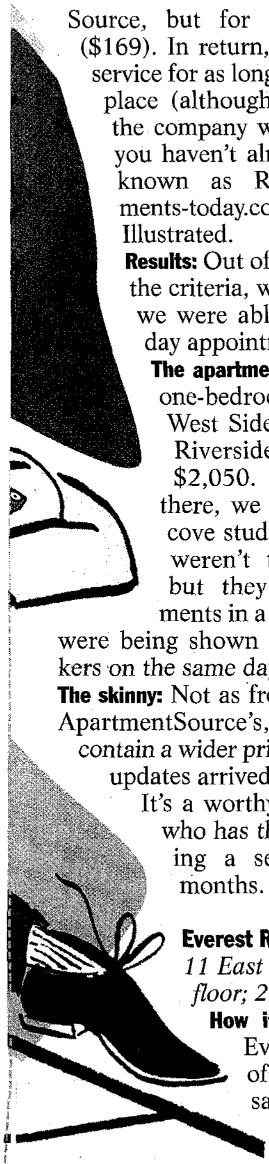
The apartments: Two were perfect: 560 West 43rd Street, an attractive one-bedroom on the twenty-seventh floor with a terrace view of the Hudson for $2,545, and a loft-style one-bedroom in a former commercial space at 120 Greenwich Street for $2,409.

The skinny: Our favorite. The Website was efficient and easy to use. The daily updates by e-mail were always on-point, and overall their list contained the freshest, most wide-ranging leads.

Rent-direct.com

How it works: The same as Apartment-

Illustrations: top, by Tom Bachtell; right, by Matthew Martin.



Source, but for considerably more ($169). In return, you get to use the service for as long as it takes to find a place (although after two months the company will want proof that you haven't already moved). Also known as Rentny.com, Apartments-today.com, and Apartments Illustrated.

Results: Out of 58 listings that met the criteria, we liked 10; of those we were able to arrange same-day appointments at 5.

The apartments: The best was a one-bedroom in Trump's new West Side development, 180 Riverside Boulevard, for $2,050. While we were there, we also saw a cute alcove studio for $1,950. They weren't the greatest deals, but they were nice apartments in a luxury building that were being shown by full-service brokers on the same day.

The skinny: Not as frequently updated as ApartmentSource's, but their list did contain a wider price range. The e-mail updates arrived several times a day. It's a worthy choice for anyone who has the luxury of stretching a search over several months.

Everest Real Estate

11 East 36th Street, seventh floor; 212-448-0771.

How it works: For $149, Everest provided a list of 135 apartments, the same list its full-service brokers use, according to a sales associate. (Please. Do we look like we're from Pittsburgh?) We were also instructed to call every few days for the next two months for updates.

Results: We called the 5 most promising of the 25 that met the criteria. Two were still available.

The apartments: When we arrived at 19 West 69th Street, the one-bedroom for $2,300 was gone. However, another one-bedroom on the fifteenth floor, for $2,450, was available. Despite lots of space (850 square feet) and a view of neighboring rooftops (a.k.a. southern exposure), it was overpriced. The next apartment, at 304 West 92nd Street, at Riverside, was in a great old building with a stone façade. The apartment, a small one-bedroom for $2,100, had a stove and sink in the living room, and the bedroom was tiny; the only two windows faced brick walls.

The skinny: Slimmer pickings than at the online services. However, when we called back the next day, the sales associate was eager to help and gave us three new leads.

Metro Management

165 Madison Avenue, at 31st Street, Suite 301; 212-686-8491.

How it works: Same deal as Evergreen, only the list costs $200 and you can call back for updates for 60 days.

Results: Of the 196 apartment leads we were sold, about 20 met the criteria. Of the five that looked good on paper, we arranged to see two.

The apartments: The first advised, "See Super M–F 6 to 7." But when we rang the super's buzzer at 6:15 on a Thursday, he was nowhere to be found. (Moments like this explain why brokers are able to charge so much.) At the second apartment, 250 West 100th Street, we arrived to find that the apartments on Metro's list had already been taken. But the doorman gave us keys to another recently vacated apartment: a spacious one-bedroom with a romantic cityscape view for $2,050.

The skinny: Our least-favorite. Many of the apartments on this list were also on the online lists, but the reverse was not true. Also, a number of apartments that this company referred us to were either rented or inaccessible. The updates were thinner than the other services', and contained repeats.

540-RENT

How it works: A phone service that advertises in the back of the *Village Voice*. For $15, you listen to a recorded list of no-fee apartments.

Results: When we called, we found that we could only limit the search by desired rent, so we were forced to listen to listings outside our targeted search. Then the line disconnected after we had only made it through ten listings.

The apartments: One of them, at 11 Waverly Place, a doorman building off Washington Square, was a pretty convertible-one-bedroom with leaded-glass windows and hardwood floors for $2,450 a month. Another was a moderate-size one-bedroom with a cityscape view at 1385 York Avenue, between 73rd and 74th Streets, a charming doorman building with a pool, for $2,495.

The skinny: Feasible but not cost-effective, since the only way to get updates is to pay an additional fee. However, the fact that even through this unwieldy and thoroughly irritating service we were able to see some decent apartments proves that the broker's fee can be beaten.

NAVIGATOR

Q: I'm in the market for a mortgage. What can I do to make this process less tedious?

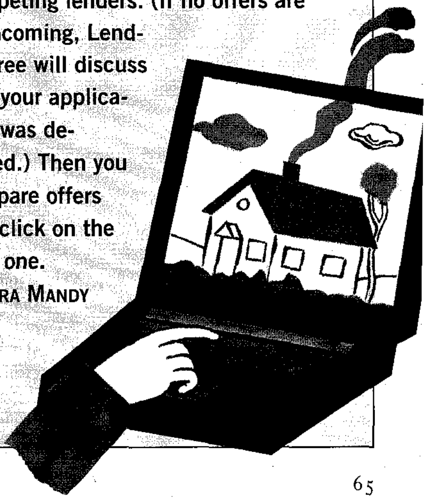
A: Knocking on bank doors and meeting with loan officers may soon become a thing of the past, thanks to the rise of online mortgage marketplaces that make it easier to search for the best mortgage rate.

At eloan.com, you can shop for the best deal among more than 70 lenders. Choose a loan, fill out the application, and within a day, E-Loan will call you to let you know if you've been pre-approved; it will also refer you to other professionals—appraisers, notaries, and title insurers—who can pay house calls if needed. Additionally, E-Loan will continue to monitor your mortgage over the life of the loan, alerting you to refinancing opportunities.

Manhattan-based mortgageit.com provides a similar service, offering a market of 120 lenders. What sets this company apart—in addition to its offering 24-hour customer service Monday through Friday—is a personal touch. Your application is reviewed by an actual human being instead of a computer-run algorithm before being presented to potential lenders.

Lendingtree.com forwards your application form to lenders who, based on your income, your credit history, and the property's location, are most likely to green-light your loan. Within a day, you'll get up to four responses from competing lenders. (If no offers are forthcoming, LendingTree will discuss why your application was declined.) Then you compare offers and click on the best one.

TARA MANDY



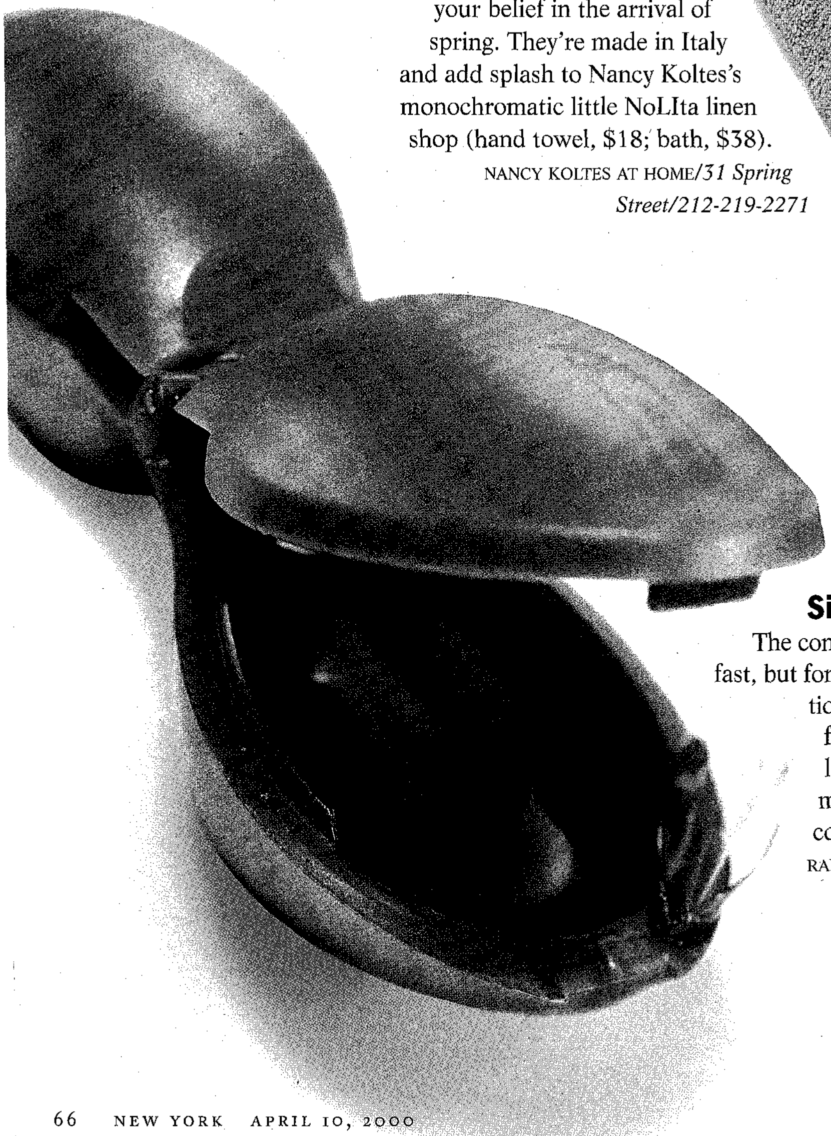
BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Blossom Dearies

Even if the bulbs on your windowsill won't be forced, these cheery cotton-terry towels will prop up your belief in the arrival of spring. They're made in Italy and add splash to Nancy Koltes's monochromatic little NoLIta linen shop (hand towel, $18; bath, $38). NANCY KOLTES AT HOME/*31 Spring Street/212-219-2271*

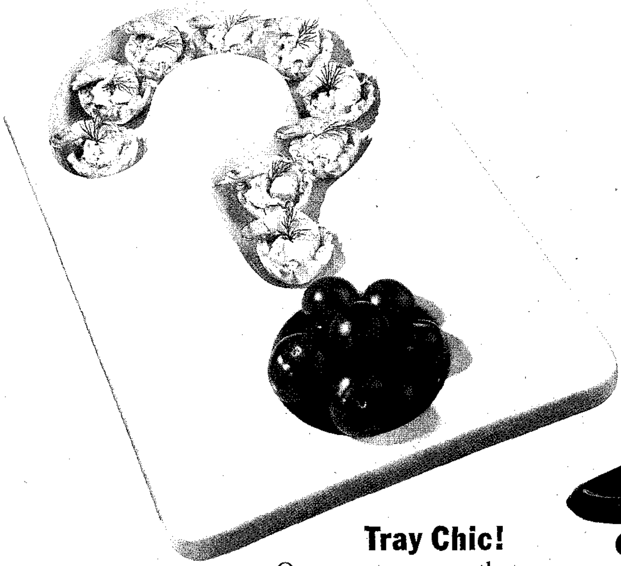


Sight Savers

The contact-wearing population is fading fast, but for those not ready to take the laser-correction plunge, there's good news. Interior designer Irit Dar, founder of ID Studio, has devised a stylish contact-lens case, something of an oxymoron. Her i-pod is made of sturdy plastic (so it will survive the kids) and comes in great Pucci-ish color combinations ($13). RANDOM ACCESSORIES/*169 Thompson Street/212-358-9079*

Photographed by Steve Wisbauer

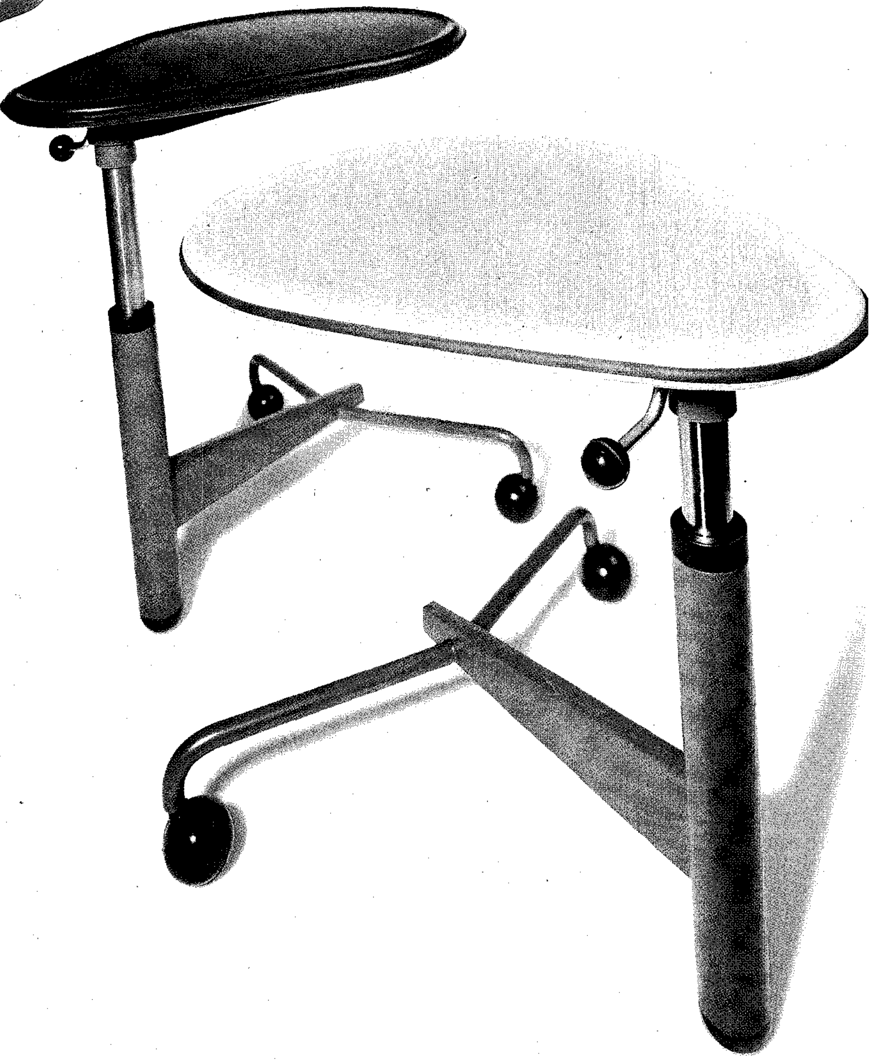
Send shopping questions to Corky Pollan, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999.



This One's Just Right

If Goldilocks comes to mind when you're shopping for end tables—that one's too tall, this too short—consider the Kick Table. A tiny lever lets you set it at just the right height (from 13 to 20 inches), while two small wheels let you pivot it 360 degrees. This lacquered-acrylic-and-enameled-steel table is the clever idea of Toshiyuki Kita, a Japanese-born, Italian-trained designer who's a whiz at combining Eastern and Western elements in ingenious ways ($550; also in blue or black).

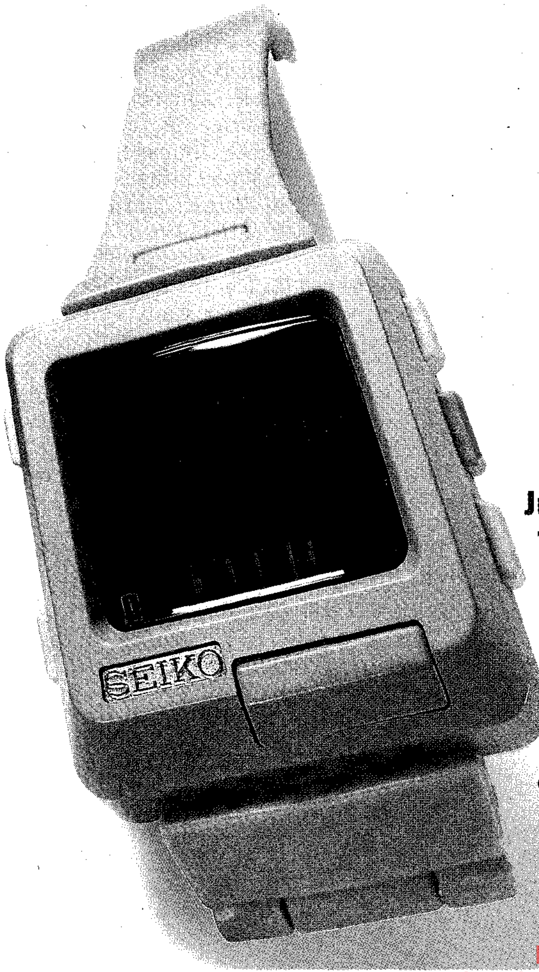
MOSS/*146 Greene Street / 212-226-2190*



Tray Chic!

One way to ensure that your hors d'oeuvre get the attention they deserve is to serve them in exclamation-point and question-mark trays. The ceramic servers were designed by Miguel Calvo for Bookan (French slang for "noise"), and this newish company prides itself on always keeping in mind a "smiley and elegant design away from a . . . pure didactical functionality." We'll ignore the French penchant for philosophizing: These servers are just fun ($45).

TOTEM/*71 Franklin Street/212-925-5506*



Just in Time

Talk about smart. Scroll Seiko's new "h" watch and you'll get the time in 38 cities in different time zones—from Anchorage to Jeddah to Wellington—as well as the respective country code for overseas phone calls and the numeric day, month, year, and day of the week (great when you land in Australia). If that's not enough, the "h" is a stopwatch, timer, and alarm clock with five alarms (think wake-up call, meetings, reminders, whatever) and has a full-panel dot-matrix LCD screen. (Translation: You can actually read it.) Oh yes, it's also smart-looking ($175; in blue and beige too).

FLIGHT 001/*96 Greenwich Avenue, near 12th Street/212-691-1001*

SHYAMA PATEL

Shirting the Issue

Collar pointers: *Ladylike chic doesn't require a whole new wardrobe. Add one (carefully chosen) shirtdress to your closet, and* **learn to love starch again.**

Woman-tailored: From left, shirtdresses by ABS, French Connection, Kathryn Dianos, and Parallel.

IF YOU SECRETLY BELIEVE YOUR HANDBAG should match your shoes and white gloves never went out of style, this season's ladylike look is for you. For muggy days on the way, light shirtdresses are your cool summer salvation. The best are in crisp fabrics, with hemlines that skim the knee (just beware of dumpy fits—you're not after a housecoat).

Preppy prints are a favorite for shirtdresses. We love a cap-sleeved checked one from **ABS**, in red, black, or blue ($100 at Macy's). For dressier occasions (garden parties, perhaps), try **Laundry by Shelli Segal**'s short, shapely silk gingham in black or red ($198 at Bloomingdale's and Lord & Taylor).

Feeling a little less Nantucket? Try solid, streamlined styles like **Chaiken**'s supersleek black dress with a wrapped front and slightly poufed sleeves ($238 at Scoop stores). We'd also happily wear **Kathryn Dianos**'s version ($140 at Stackhouse) or **Parallel**'s cool, asymmetrical pink one ($146 at Bloomingdale's). **French Connection**'s tie-waisted winner comes in black, white, and turquoise ($98 at French Connection stores).

Macy's (212-695-4400); Bloomingdale's (212-705-2000); Lord & Taylor (212-391-3344); Stackhouse, 282 Lafayette St. (212-925-6931).

Picks of the Week

Union Square Optical is taking half off all eyeglass and sunglass frames (from Giorgio Armani, Calvin Klein, Gucci, Cutler & Gross, and others). Prices are $75–$250; eye exams are $35. *9 W. 14th St. (212-242-0314); A.E., M.C., V.; Mon.–Sat. 10–6; 4/8–4/22.*

White + Warren's stylish knits (at stores like Henri Bendel) are at least half off at the sample sale: Cotton-blend tees are $25, three-quarter-sleeve cashmere sweaters are $50, cashmere cardigans are $75, and cashmere twinsets are $115. Sizes S–XL. *80 W. 40th St., third floor (212-398-3295); M.C., V.; Fri. 9–5; 4/7.*

Mackie by Bob Mackie, the designer's less expensive line of cocktaily suits and dresses, is now 50–70 percent off: Suits are $150–$350; evening dresses are $195–$395; pants are $50–$195. Sizes 4–14. *498 Seventh Ave., 22nd floor, near 36th St. (212-736-5505); A.E., M.C., V.; Wed.–Fri. 10–5; 4/5–4/7.* ▬

ALWAYS A DEAL

The Latest Scoop

THIS WEEK, STEFANI GREENFIELD, OWNER OF ALL SCOOP STORES AND STYLE guru to the Jitney set, is adding a sale-only branch to the empire: **Scoop It Up**, a 400-square-foot annex to her Upper East Side shop, which will take in and clear out trendy bags, shoes, and clothes from the other locations. "It's not about leftovers, it's about missed opportunities," says Greenfield, reassuring us that this shop'll be as enticing as the others. With 40 to 70 percent markdowns storewide, we don't need convincing. *1273 Third Avenue, entrance at 73rd St. (212-535-5577).*

DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Shyama Patel, *New York* Magazine, 444 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022-6999, four weeks before the sale. Sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be given preference.

Photograph by Michele Gastl.

SUMMER ENTERTAINING FAIR

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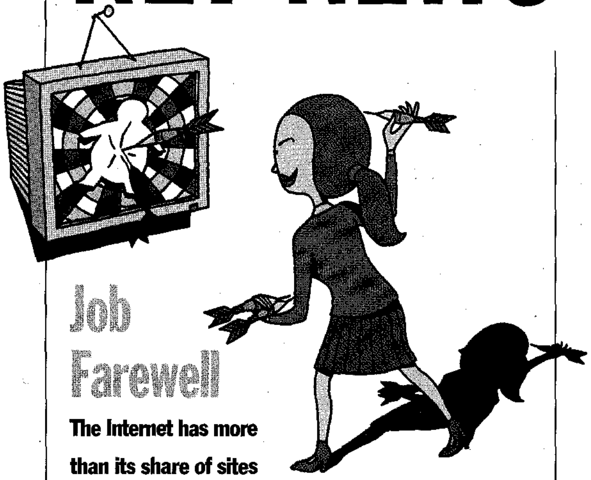
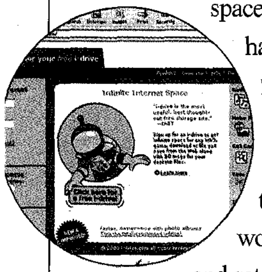
PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH CHEN

NET NEWS



Job Farewell

The Internet has more than its share of sites for job-searchers, but it hasn't offered much help to job-quitters. Enter www.kissmyfreckledassbye.com, an online research project that invites disgruntled employees to post their dream resignations. (Most aren't the kind the begin with "After long and careful consideration . . .") If you're thinking of making the big leap, the "Kiss-Off Quiz" can help you decide whether you'll regret it later. Even if you're just bored at work, there's always amusement value in letters that begin like this: "I would like to let you know that there is a 'surprise' audit scheduled for two days after I leave. I have left 36 separate mistakes in the paperwork."



Space Cadet

Clear some closet space next to those eight-tracks: Your floppy disks are officially obsolete. Which is especially good news if you haven't been able to find them in months. The Net now offers the online equivalent of Manhattan Mini Storage, without space limitations, storage fees, or hassles with hand trucks. On **www.idrive.com** (and similar sites), your documents, MP3 files, and digital photos can be stored on a password-protected Web server and retrieved from any computer with Internet access. Best of all, records in virtual storage are immune to coffee spills.

BY HILLARY ROSNER

The Priceline Is Right

If you're in the mood to shop, the Net is a buyer's market. Place your bid on eBay. Name your fee on Priceline. Or, better yet, simply ask a shopping site to search the Web for the lowest price offered by an online store. The best even offer *Consumer Reports*–style data and product reviews to save you frustration along with money.

rusure.com The state fair of shopping sites, R U Sure can be overwhelming, but it's also comprehensive, with features that search online classifieds and find factory-outlet sales. There's even a section devoted to "Obscure Patents" that lets you shop for "hard-to-find inventions" like the Amazing Stereo Hat.

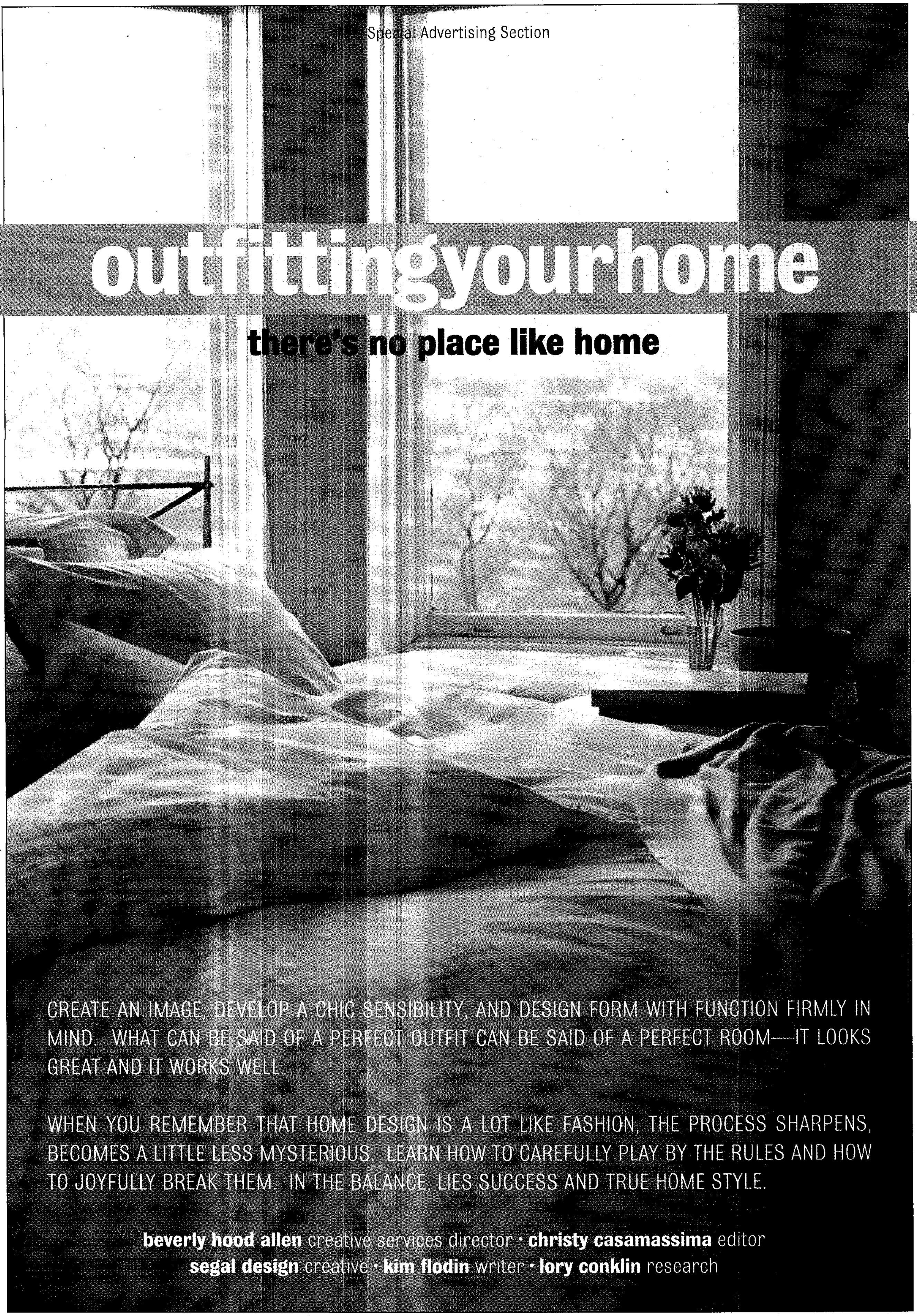
deja.com Recently redesigned from an opinion-based bulletin board into a fancy "precision buying service," deja.com posts product reviews, ratings, and even detailed specifications. To narrow down your search, its "Product Wizard" will highlight the top items in any category.

epinions.com The warmest and fuzziest of the shopping sites, Epinions lets you build a "Web of Trust" out of users whose thoughts you'd like to hear. Nor is it limited to products: The site offers a "media" section, with reviews of TV shows, films, and even magazines.

mysimon.com With a glistening grin and fifties-soda-jerk T-shirt, this site's Smiling Simon mascot puts a friendly face on Internet bargain-hunting. It also lets you track the price history of each and every product on the site—from clothing to kitchenware.

dealtime.com If you don't want to limit your search to traditional virtual vendors, DealTime searches for bargains in online classifieds, auctions, and just about anything else posted on the Net. But the best part may be the staggering statistics it serves up with your search results. For example, the Internet offers 13,771 different kinds of dog supplies, from 35 separate sellers. Presumably because pets can't drive.

EVERYTHING A BARGAIN!
$10 OR LESS



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WHEN YOU REMEMBER THAT HOME DESIGN IS A LOT LIKE FASHION, THE PROCESS SHARPENS, BECOMES A LITTLE LESS MYSTERIOUS. LEARN HOW TO CAREFULLY PLAY BY THE RULES AND HOW TO JOYFULLY BREAK THEM. IN THE BALANCE, LIES SUCCESS AND TRUE HOME STYLE.

beverly hood allen creative services director · **christy casamassima** editor
segal design creative · **kim flodin** writer · **lory conklin** research

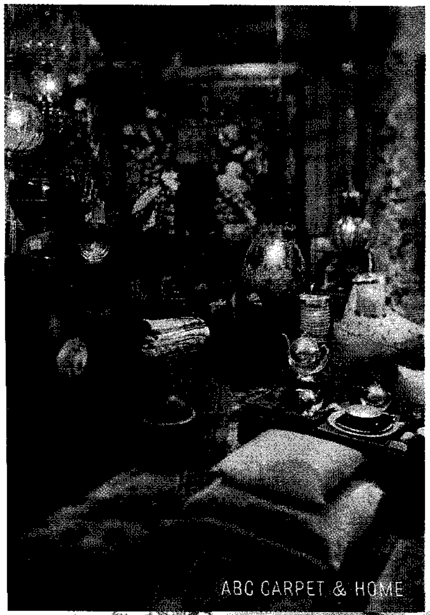
the fashion of home design

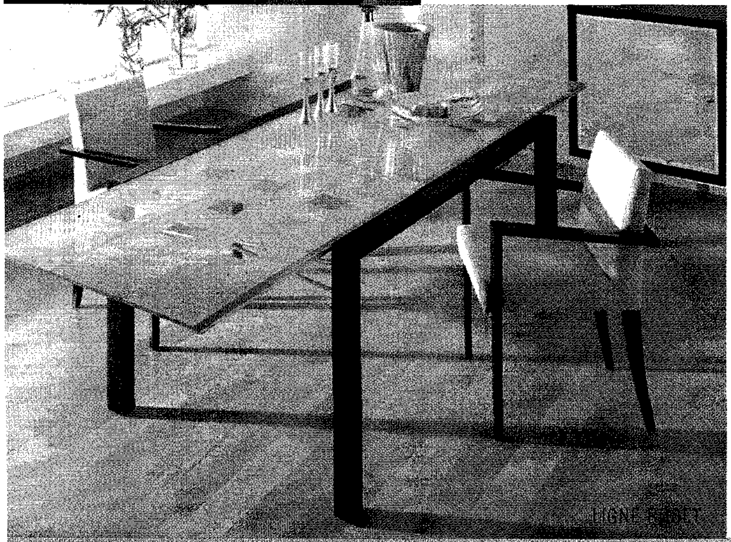
Robert Verdi, personal shopper at **ABC Carpet & Home**, draws a parallel between fashion and home design. “People understand that they need to be constantly editing and updating their closets, but they’re just starting to approach their homes in the same way.”

“If you want,” as Verdi says, “Grandma’s attic meets Paris flea market,” there’s no better place to turn than ABC Carpet & Home, the purveyor of artful decorating and emporium of practically everything you need to stamp your home with a personal statement.

“People have money and they are open to spending it on something that delivers tremendous quality, but allows the greatest flexibility,” notes Verdi. “For instance, we’re selling amazing linens made from luxury materials and we’re finding that people are changing them or adding a new pattern to the mix more frequently than ever. As in fashion, our customers are willing to buy well, yet constantly refresh and refine their look.”

Fashion must be worn to be appreciated and home treasures must be used as well. “ABC was one of the first retailers to take things out of cages,” says Verdi. “We think consumers should emulate the feel of our display floors at home. Use your things, love your things. If they get a little tattered, still allow yourself to love it more for the patina,” he adds. “We encourage people to become more adventurous and more hands-on.”





in the driver’s seat

If you seek to let your personal style shine through the details of your décor, you must stay center stage throughout the whole design process. Laurie Messman, vice president for **Ligne Roset**, a preeminent French manufacturer of contemporary furnishings, points out one of the most important trends in home design today.

“We have tremendous respect for designers and are happy to work with them and work with them well,” states Messman, once a residential interior designer herself. “But we believe that the end-user deserves the option of working with us, too. We take the customer’s money directly and arrange delivery with the customer, even when we’re working with interior designers. They are happy that we handle so much and consumers feel welcome.” In that spirit, Ligne Roset offers the same fair price to the consumer as to the trade. “Our professional sales staff will assist you in visualizing how Ligne Roset can streamline your life and turn your home into a stylish haven of comfort,” says Messman.

Another trend Messman has observed is the need for speed. “People get information from the Internet in a heartbeat and designers are often getting projects at the very last minute. Our clients don’t often want to wait. Our exclusive line of home furnishings from France catch and hold the eye. With clean designs, each piece is a functional work of art. The selection of furniture from which to choose is unsurpassed.” To keep up, Ligne Roset stocks a tremendous amount of inventory for the New York and Connecticut area. “We want to meet our customers’ demands,” adds Messman. “They are in the driver’s seat.”

the courage to mix and match

What is this newly empowered consumer choosing to do? Mix it up, apparently. “Just as a fresh rethinking of varied textures and fabrics can be spotted on the spring runways, so too can evidence of that spirit be spotted in the home showroom,” says Robert Kron, senior designer of **Manhattan Cabinetry.** The firm creates custom pieces of furniture and cabinetry for any room in the home or office. Their motto: “If you can imagine it, we can build it.”

What the consumer is imagining is a mix of influences and materials. “Furniture now can have varying influences. A piece can be made of exotic veneers, wood with metals, or wood with textured or frosted glass panels,” explains Kron. “In any environment, different styles can now be mixed pleasurably.”

ABC
CARPET
&HOME

Manhattan
Broadway at e.19th Street
212.473.3000

Bronx, NY
1055 Bronx River Ave.
718.842.8770

Delray Beach, FL
777 S. Congress
561.279.7777

ABC Carpet at Harrods, UK
+44.171.730.1234

www.abchome.com.

What makes Manhattan Cabinetry well equipped to deal with such a courageous consumer is experience. "For 25 years our staff of designers have worked with clients. Some come in with a very clear vision of what they want and we supply the skills to make sure it comes out technically correct. Others are far more vague and our designers help articulate their needs and vision, creating a plan, all at factory-direct prices," says Kron.

A trend that has occurred is a dramatic drop in the popularity of plastic laminates. "We're definitely seeing more wood and natural materials. When customers do use man-made materials such as a synthetic ribbon mahogany laminate—technology is currently so advanced that people can't believe they're not seeing the real thing," he explains. Will laminates come back? "Sure," says Kron. "Who knows when, but design isn't static. Like fashion, everything evolves."

acaseforevolution

Indeed the way people even set up their homes has evolved, notes Richard Broderson of **Foremost Furniture**, New York City and Long Island's largest full-service furniture showroom. "People get married later, live together for a while, or enter a home from a previous marriage. They already have possessions and a point of view," he notes. The customers shopping in Foremost's showroom are primarily concerned about blending already acquired pieces and how the result of that blending is going to support their lifestyle.

"Take the evolution of the 'great room,'" says Broderson of the living space that often incorporates as many components as an eating area, a large-screen TV, home theater, stereo, and computer right off the kitchen. "The 'great room' didn't exist 10 years ago and the reason it evolved is because customers wanted it to."

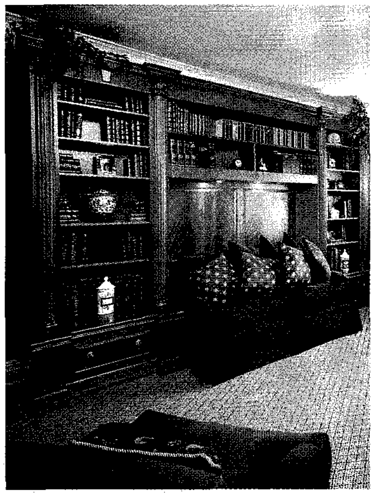
Portico Interiors, well known for their clean yet luscious home furnishings and bed and bath accessories, epitomizes a company that allows its own nature to evolve alongside the changing needs of its customers. "Our customers don't want to purchase in lockstep the same thing that everyone else is buying. For the most part, they're young, but sophisticated and they have good taste and an eye for design. You see it in the way they dress, as well as in their homes," says Jennifer Oppenheimer, design director.

Catering to this fashion-conscious crowd, Portico Interiors began an interior design service that can go as far as the customer wants them to go. "We offer a whole gamut of services and products beyond our own inventory. We can provide window and floor treatments, consult on paint colors, arrange and design custom-built furniture, as well as help find the perfect rug or antique piece," notes Oppenheimer. With this entirely free service, customers are finding the best of both worlds at Portico Interiors—the pros to help them if they choose to do so, and a design sensitivity that captures simplicity with flair.

theclassicsneverleft

You can never go wrong with a classic foundation to your wardrobe, and similarly, the best foundation of a room's outfit is sometimes an evergreen one. **Carlyle Custom Convertibles**, traditionally known for making the best sofa bed in the world, actually makes excellent furniture, period. "Think beyond the bed of our couches," says Darren deMatteo, president. "All the hidden things, the tailoring, welting, fabric, construction—the excellent craftsmanship is what makes us who we are."

Noting that sofa beds are the ultimate New York space maximizer, deMatteo reports that long-time customers are coming to him for non-sleeper furniture, too. Clients are furnishing their second home or their Manhattan pied-à-terre. The sleeper sofa that once put up a visiting parent is now bed to a grown child. "My clients know that our sleeper sofas last 30 years and they want that dependability in their other furniture as well," says deMatteo.



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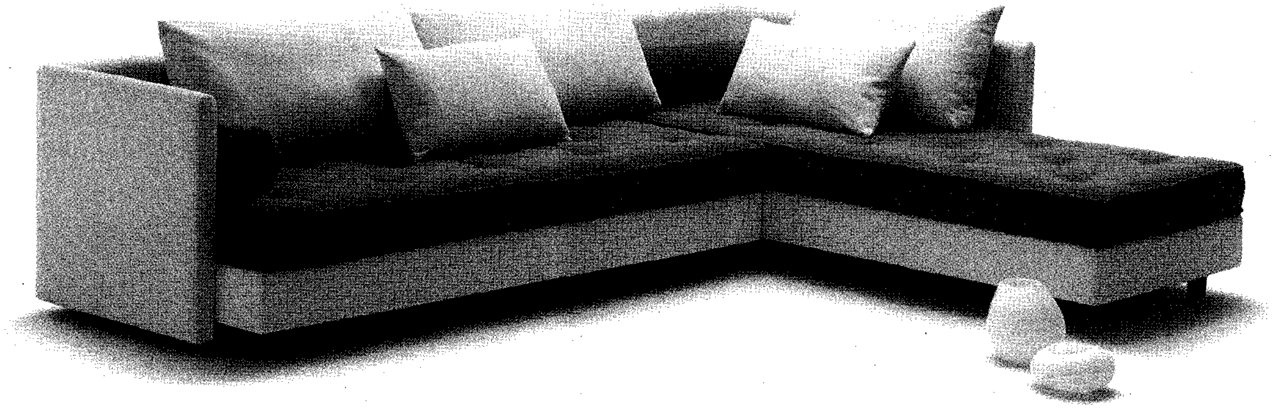

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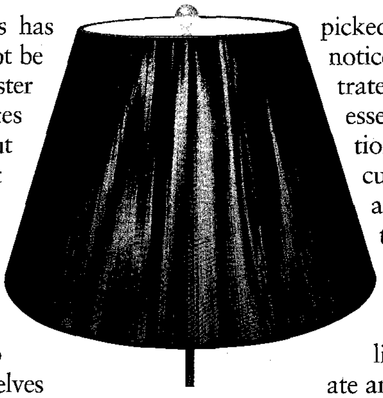


ORIENTAL LAMP SHADE

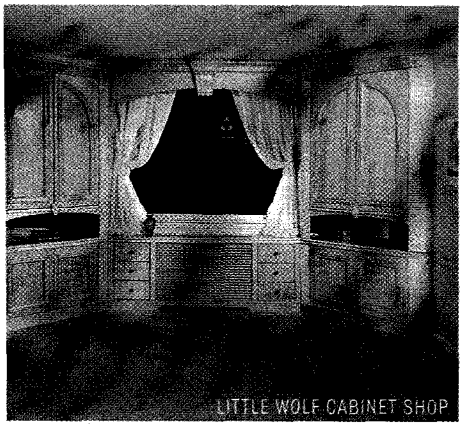
In response, Carlyle Custom Convertibles has just introduced an exclusive line that cannot be converted into sleepers, called the Westminster Collection. The look? "English," states deMatteo. "Trends may come and go, but we find that the traditional classics are what our customers return to again and again."

The experts at **Little Wolf Cabinet Shop**, founded in 1956, would have to agree. Whether they are working with the trade or the public, the Little Wolf Cabinet Shop designers and furniture makers find themselves creating furniture in all types of wood that often emulates traditional English pieces. "It's a kind of style that weathers well," notes John Wolf, vice president.

Little Wolf Cabinet Shop customers arrive at the store with their own preliminary measurements. Based on these figures and their needs, the designers draw up preliminary plans and estimates. "Before we actually start the project, we remeasure the space. Our prices include installation and delivery, too," Wolf adds.

punchingitup

Again, think fashion. You've got your mainstays—the classic, clean foundation that you built upon. Good bones cost a lot, though. Few of us have the budget or inclination to shop for a whole new ensemble every season. But do we trudge through the spring looking like we did in the winter, year in and year out? Even the most conservative among us jazz up our wardrobes with accessories.



LITTLE WOLF CABINET SHOP

Gregg Renfrew, CEO of **The Wedding List**, providers of an exclusive selection of hand-picked products for couples and gift-givers, notices that newly wedded couples concentrate as much on the accents as they do the essentials. She chalks it up to this generation's fashion savvy. "Our 'second' set of customers, the folks who buy gifts from us and then return to buy special items for their own homes, are also paying attention to ways to spice up their rooms," she says. Hot right now are luxurious throws, mix-and-match china and linens, and framed wall pieces to punctuate an environment.

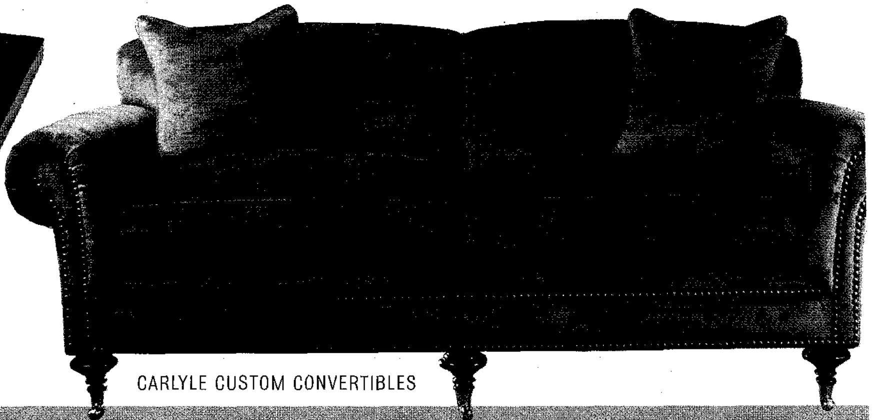
Renfrew also observes that while brides and grooms still physically come to the showrooms to mull over their many choices, the more mature and established customers access the items from the company's Web site. "Our customers have access to online consultants if needed. We can really guide purchasers from the comfort of their own home!" she says.

Sometimes you need to physically see that the accent you have in mind is going to work, however, and the folks at **Oriental Lamp Shade** encourage people to do just that. "Bring in your lamp base to pick the perfect shade," suggests Ron Murakami, president.

Talk about getting a bang for your buck, lamps not only illuminate but can instantly transform the mood of a room. Oriental Lamp Shade's range of shade materials reads like a fashion magazine's litany—silk, beads, faux animal skins sit next to the more typical linens, papers, and parchments. "We're getting a lot of response from a new shade that is a white frame wrapped in silk string of any color," notes Murakami.

Go to **La Belle Epoque**, a gallery specializing in original vintage advertising posters from the 1890s to the modern age, for a unique way to personalize your space. The posters come from around the world with a heavy emphasis on European work from some of the most important artists of their day including Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Alphonse Mucha. "Vintage advertising posters are not only a form of decoration, but they are also a collectible," says Linda Tarasuk, co-owner.

THE WEDDING LIST



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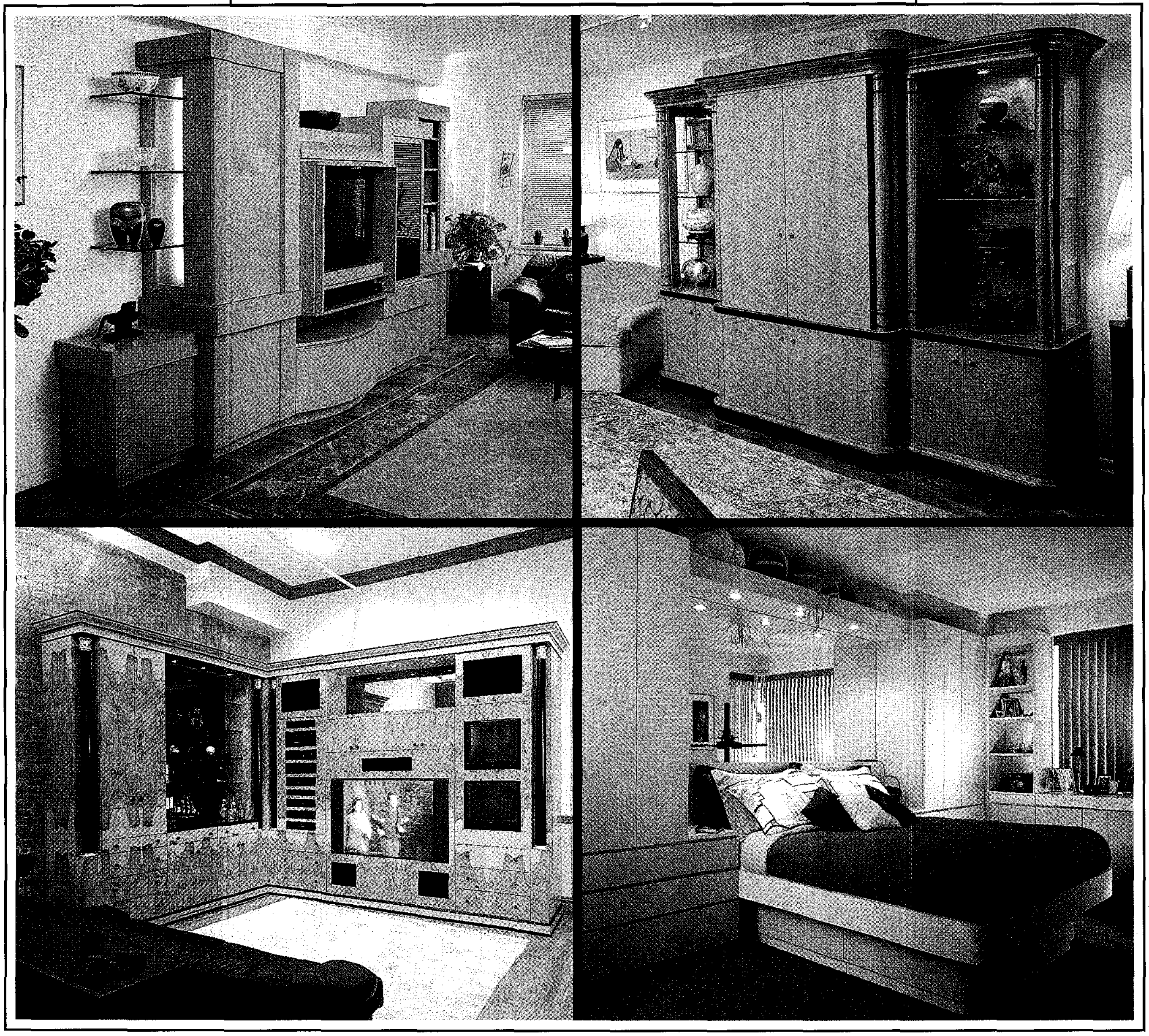

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LA BELLE EPOQUE

When you're planning your home office take it seriously even if the office means a corner in your guest room or a counter end of your kitchen. The professional services of **techline studio new york**'s staff designers and architects really try to understand your space and work-at-home needs. They can recommend such innovations as fabric panels, rounded edges to soften functional shapes, and modular pieces specially cut to fit around awkward walls, pipes, and moldings. Hiding the unsightly mess of electrical cords can be achieved with wire management. Gavin Bromell, president of techline studio and an architect himself, is also bullish on wall beds. "It's unbelievable how much space a bed or futon takes up in a barely used guest room," he explains. "Or techline wall bed recedes into a cabinet only 18 inches deep.

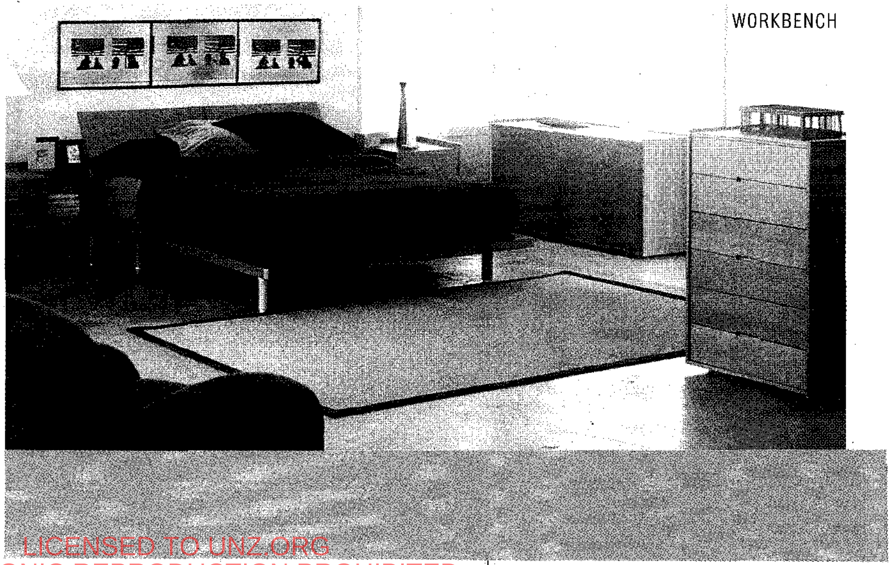
modern moves forward

Traditional is forever and retro is fun, but for design of any kind to stay relevant it must advance. Bernice Wollman of **Workbench**, the company that offers modern storage systems that are completely flexible in their customization quotient, is happy to report that home design is indeed progressing. "Now that the mid-century modern revival has become fully accepted, we are seeing in our shops, for the first time in 20 years, a comfort level with clean, modern design. This allows a new, genuinely contemporary product to emerge," says Wollman. "For about five years, consumers had a very retro relationship with modern design. That was almost necessary to process modern's sensibility. Today's home dwellers have absorbed what modern is and they're comfortable with it. They are now starting to take chances with ideas that are forward not just retro-backward."

when to hire a designer

Consider a professional decorator or designer, especially if you're investing a lot of money. "A whole room or a renovation is not an everyday occurrence," says Karen Fisher, president of **Designer Previews**, a service that matches up clients with the perfect professional for their tastes, budgets, and needs. "Many New Yorkers are

WORKBENCH



very sharp with a strong sense of style, but they're realists, too. They know that good taste doesn't help you choose the right proportion sofa for your space," she adds.

functionfirst

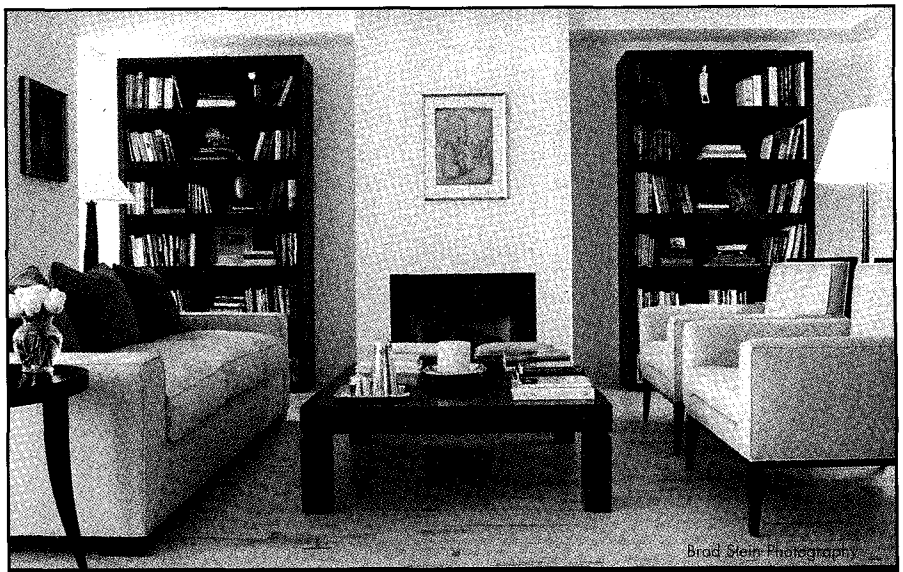
Just as the most timeless fashion makes sense, experts are noticing a trend toward furniture that values function. "Clients are embracing a contemporary look because of the chic function it provides," states Seemak Hakakian of **ddc-domus design collection.** Purveyors of high-end, exclusive contemporary furniture from Europe, ddc has just moved its showroom into a Philip Johnson-designed space downtown. Amidst the cutting-edge interior is beautiful furniture that truly works. Think extension tables, sleep sofas, and reclining chairs, but don't think dowdy. "We've got a coffee table that is actually three glass circles nesting on top of each other," says Hakakian. "It opens so smoothly and so smartly into three separate tables when needed. Our customers are crazy for it!"

✻TIPSFROM THEPROS

✻ Be brave. Order extra panels for more luxurious curtains. If you're paring down for the warm weather, take the curtains off entirely. "Going half-way often makes no statement at all," says Robert Verdi of ABC Carpet & Home.

✻ Rely on a company's expertise. "Our staff knows our stock inside and out. They've seen any given sofa in hundreds of fabrics," says Laurie Messman of Ligne Roset. Our company has designers on staff as well.

✻ Get involved. "The more engaged my clients remain throughout the creative process, the happier they are with the final product," says Robert Kron of Manhattan Cabinetry.



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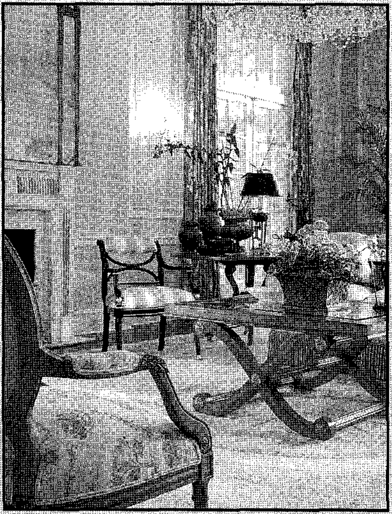

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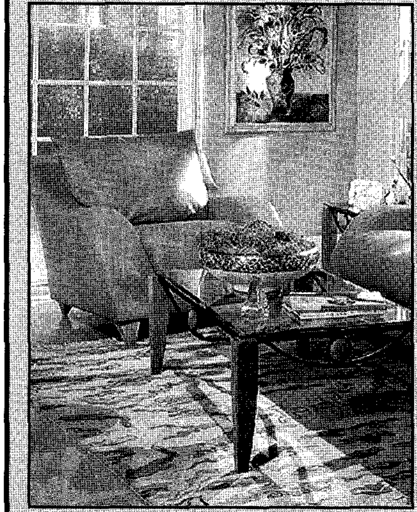

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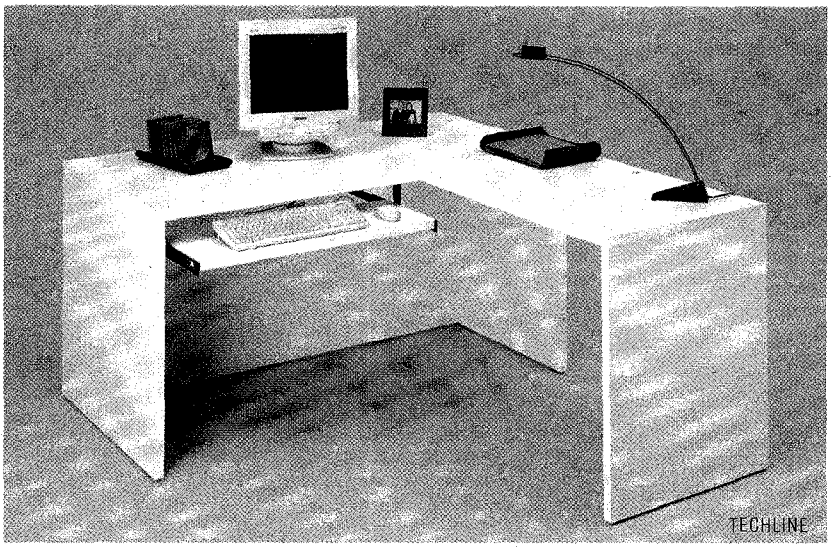


TECHLINE

✳ Start a scrapbook. "Take a hint from the professionals and gather in one place color swatches, photographs of rooms you love, and any other visual reminders," says Richard Broderson of Foremost Furniture.

✳ Plan your space. Jennifer Oppenheimer of Portico Interiors explains that it is incredibly important to factor in the scale of all furniture to the appropriate room. This can easily be achieved by using graph paper and a scale.

✳ Don't trust your mind's eye, Darren deMatteo of Carlyle Custom Convertibles tells us. Never buy anything without taking the color swatch home to the natural light of your room. The same goes for size. That sofa may seem compact in the gigantic showroom, but back in your studio it could be another story.

✳ Don't give up an inch of space. Case in point: the quintessential New York eyesore, the radiator. Little Wolf Cabinet Shop does a brisk business of miraculously turning simple radiator covers into window seats, bookcases, shelving units—even desks!

✳ Change with the season. Your beautiful cobalt blue plates were perfect for New Year's Eve dinner with gold tabletop accents, but The Wedding List suggests you lose the wintry gold, pair the plates with crisp, cotton raspberry linens, and you're ready for spring.

✳ Know the power of light. Ron Murakami of Oriental Lamp Shade suggests you line the inside of your shade with a soft pink fabric. No one sees the lining, just a diffused, soft light that lifts the room to something extraordinary.

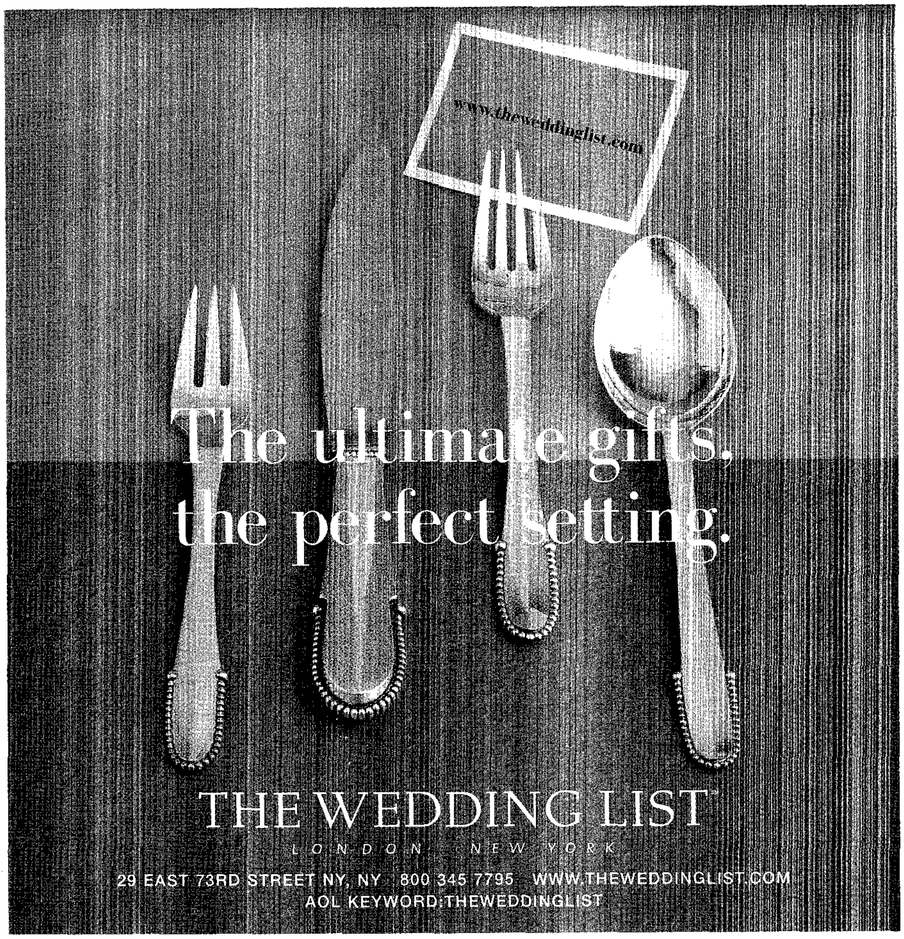
DDC-DOMUS DESIGN COLLECTION

✳ Don't get distracted by decorating, advises Bernice Wollman of Workbench. Start instead by furnishing for comfort, function, and organization.

✳ Think like a pilot when planning a workspace. "Find a corner," advises Gavin Bromell of techline. "Now tuck into its cockpit-like depth your computer, the trash can, and your legs." Work out to your two wings and add other necessities.

✳ Choose extraordinary details. For instance, when framing your artwork, Linda Tarasuk of La Belle Epoque suggests you consider the framing and matting as an extension of the artwork, and not just a container for it.

✳ Take your time. Relax and look around at all the options. New York City is the Mecca of home design—take advantage of it advises Seemak Hakakian of ddc-domus design collection. When you're ready to purchase, bring a trusted friend along, if not a design professional.



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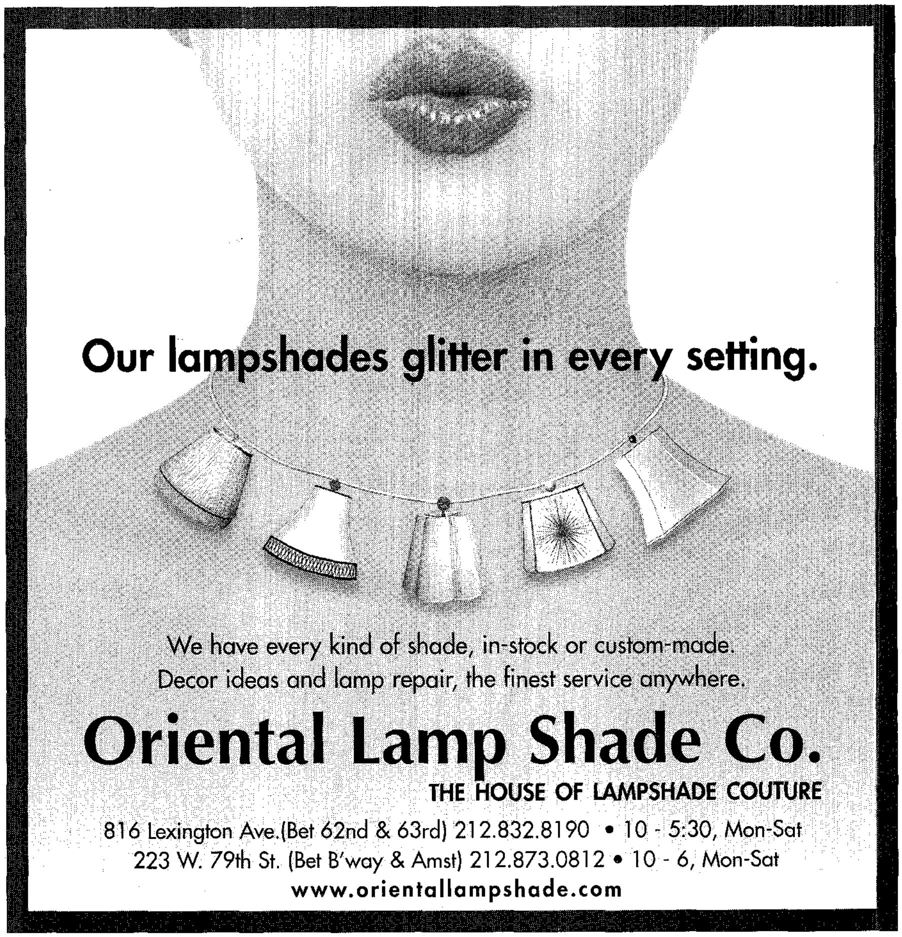

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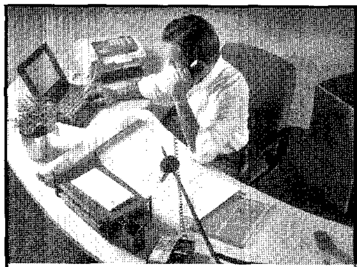

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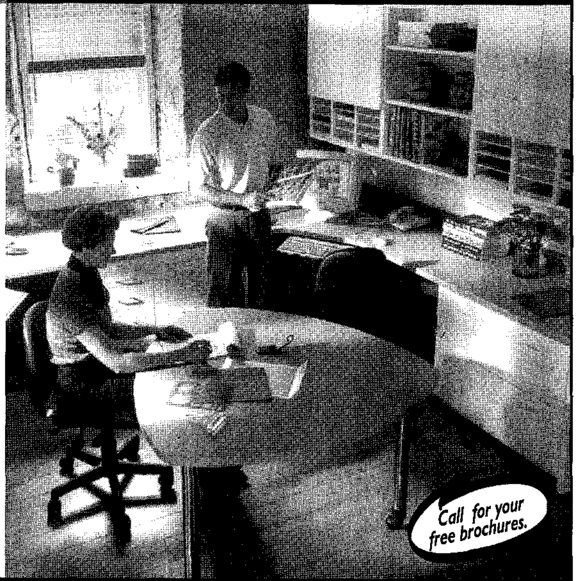

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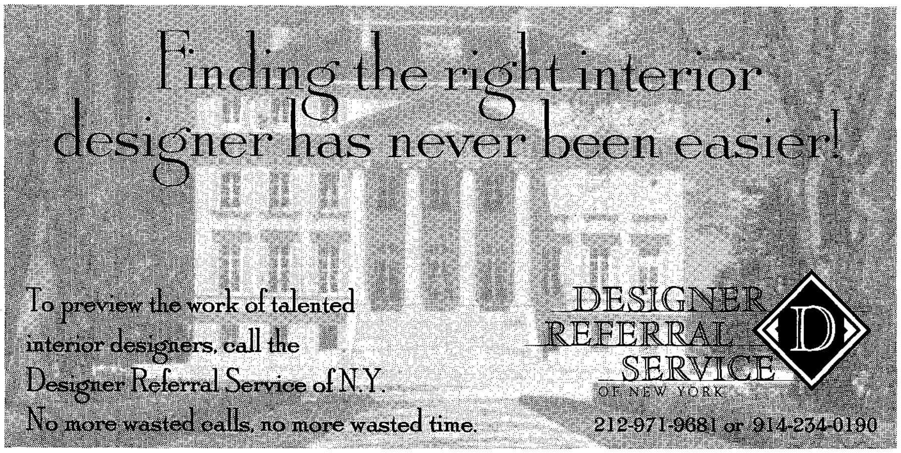

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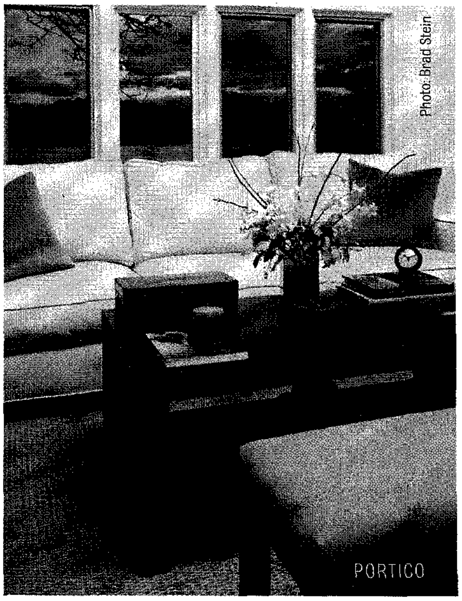

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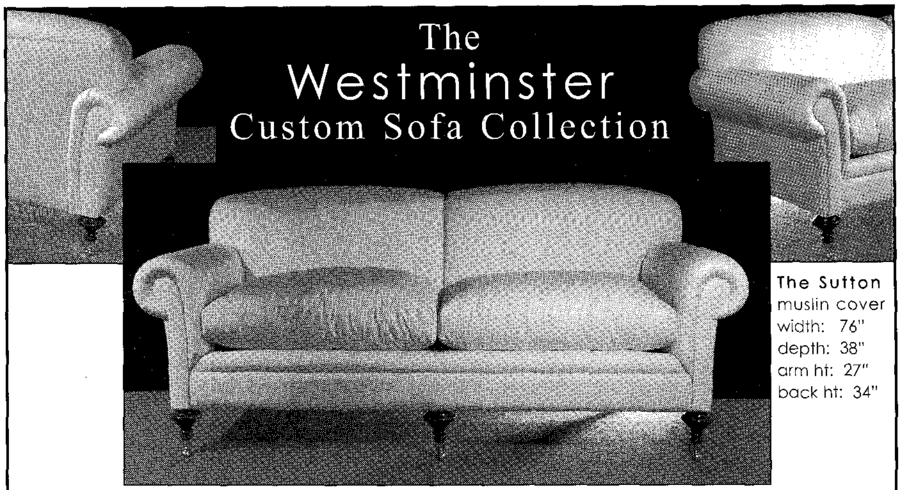

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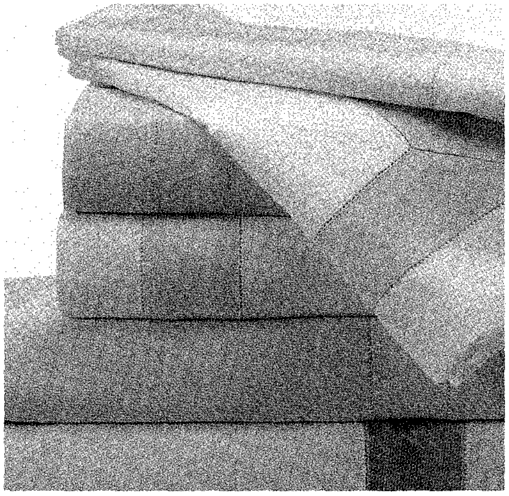

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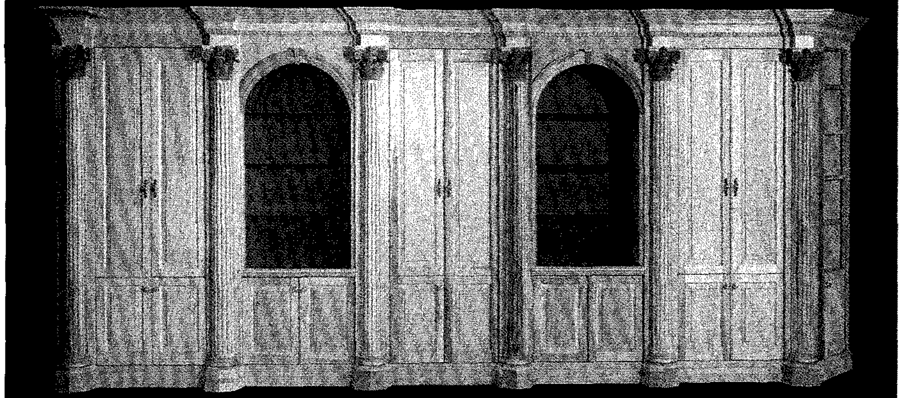

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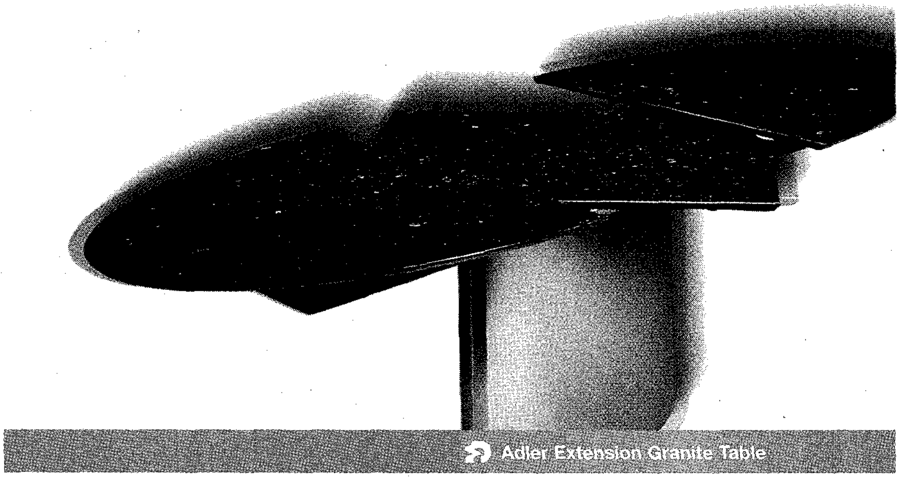

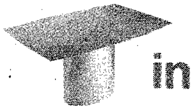

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MOVIES **PETER RAINER**

For the Record

Stephen Frears and John Cusack have a groove going in 'High Fidelity,' a good-natured comedy about vinyl, musical taste (not yours), and growing up.

In the groove: Cusack's iconoclastic music lover with off-again, on-again girlfriend Iben Hjejle, in Frears's *High Fidelity.*

ROB GORDON (JOHN CUSACK), who runs the Chicago retro record store Championship Vinyl, is a maestro at creating compilation tapes, and **High Fidelity**, the movie he figures in, is something of a compilation tape, too. It's Rob's confessional—he often speaks directly to us—and its rhythms are alternately sodden, imploring, rapt, antic. Stephen Frears, directing from a script by D. V. DeVincentis, Steve Pink, John Cusack, and Scott Rosenberg based on the highly regarded London-based Nick Hornby novel, doesn't keep things on an even keel; that's not his idea of a good time. The film has the herky-jerky propulsion of an interior monologue, but there's no real rage lurking inside Rob's obsessiveness. He's too shallow for that, too juiced by his own funk. Frears has made a movie about extreme narcissism that somehow also manages to be self-effacing. The discombobulated lives on display, despite all the turmoil and regret, are essentially comical. Frears's characters see themselves as players on a stage; the drama being enacted is the battle of the sexes, and they enjoy gaping at their own spectacle. They're bemused by how screwed-up they are, and how screwed-up everybody else is, too.

When Rob's live-in girlfriend, Laura (Iben Hjejle), walks out on him because she doesn't see him moving on in his life, the rupture kicks off a long-term wallow in which he ranges back over his catalogue of Top Five Breakups. (Rob is always making top-five lists, such as Top Five Songs About Death and Top Five First Cuts on First Albums.) The flashbacks to these breakups, which begin with a spurning in middle school and move on past the college years, are like little blackout sketches, piquant and deadpan. They encompass a wide range of female partnership, from the mousy to the chaste to the glamorous (Catherine Zeta-Jones plays Charlie, the glamour-puss). The film is saying that women, in their own special ways, mess men up (and perhaps men deserve it). Later, Rob comes up with the notion of actually getting back in touch with his top five. The before-and-after contrasts are predictable: Everything has changed, nothing has changed. Laura is right. Rob hasn't really moved on in his life; he's stuck in the same vinyl groove. But she's wrong too, and maybe this is why she keeps drifting back to him even after walking out. What she senses is that their breakup is a scrambling of all the big breakups he's ever had, a compilation tape of cracked connections, and that maybe he's ready to change tracks. Still, she's clear-eyed about Rob's mopiness, and her sporadic re-entrances into his life seem to be more for his benefit than for hers. She's a *generous* jilter.

Even though *High Fidelity* is framed as a male confessional, it gives its women equal space in the confession booth. (It could stand as a companion piece to Cusack's earlier *Say Anything.*) There's no rancor in this film's view of men's waywardness and no great sentimentality either. If the Woody Allen of a few decades ago had made this movie, he might have turned it into a nutty, prickly harangue; Albert Brooks, who has already covered some of this same terrain, especially in *Modern Romance,* would have brought out the natteriness and raging ego in his lovelorn stupe. John Cusack plays Rob as a living contradiction, a restless layabout. Todd Louiso and Jack Black, who play Rob's co-workers in the record store, are bookends of guy geekiness; the latter is a stumpy, wise-ass know-it-all, and the former, with his chalky pallor and faint eyes, is so recessive that he's practically a revenant.

Cusack, who was so remarkable in Frears's *The Grifters,* seems to respond particularly well to this director, embodying his every-which-way sensibility. Cusack can go from explosive to winsome in a flash, and then on to something else entirely, and it all adds up. This quality makes him the perfect actor for a movie in which, without being highfalutin about it, he has to play a youngish Everyman. He projects, at various times, all the flavors of male privilege, and the various females he provokes all respond to different aspects of him. Except

Photograph by Melissa Moseley.

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New York Magazine

Laura, who seems to "get" him in toto. Rob gets Laura, too; he's sharp-eyed about the ways of women. He just can't do all that much, in the end, with his information.

As a man-out-of-time, Rob seems peculiarly up-to-date. In his mid-twenties he was afraid of being alone for the rest of his days, and now, a decade later, he's caught between postadolescence and a premature midlife crisis. He's a welter of wacked-out life cycles, and there's something appealingly familiar about his mishmash. He's the scraggly standard-bearer for his generation. His retroness is half of who he is; musically, he's hip to both boomer rock perennials and punk and hip-hop, and he has a snob's taste in both. It's the middle range, the soft-pop standards, he can't abide. (He can't understand how Laura can like both Art Garfunkel *and* Marvin Gaye.) Rob's musical tastes are keyed to his emotional situations; at times, he seems to live his life in either a rave or a dive. He frequents a bar with a sign saying AL CAPONE DRANK HERE OFTEN, and he points out for us the movie theater where John Dillinger—betrayed by a woman, of course—was gunned down. For Rob, Chicago indulges his hurt feelings, and it plays into his charade of being, in some small way, both gangster and gangsta. It's a city where he can keep his options open. *High Fidelity* is the rare comedy that gets inside the ways men try to make sense of themselves, and it does so without special pleading. It's a sweet, raffish entertainment, blessedly free of baloney.

In brief: THE SPIRIT OF THE COLD WAR LIVES on in the hokey, enjoyably florid **East-West**, which begins in June 1946 with a band of emigrants from the West arriving in Stalin's Russia expecting amnesty and good will only to be executed or sent to forced-labor camps. For propaganda purposes, a Russian-émigré physician (Oleg Menchikov) and his French wife (Sandrine Bonnaire) are spared, but he is boxed in by his "model-returnee" status, and she aches for Paris. Catherine Deneuve turns up as a celebrated French actress who aids the cause of freedom, and the West has never looked so glamorous. Who would have believed that eyeliner and lip gloss and great cheekbones could be this *political*? . . . DreamWorks' latest animated feature, **The Road to El Dorado**, has a few sequences with real swoop and glide; a few semi-forgettable Elton John–Tim Rice ditties; some unmistakably Rosie Perez–ish line readings by Rosie Perez, playing a native girl; and enough shimmering gold surfaces to make you believe the Yucatan is an adjunct of Trump Tower. ■

Peter Rainer's 1998–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

THEATER JOHN SIMON

Pyramid Scheme

In a numbingly Disneyfied adaptation by Elton John and Tim Rice, the once celestial 'Aida' is decked out in gaudy finery and cheap platitudes.

SHAKESPEARE COULD IMAGINE NOTHING WORSE than the rude mechanicals' offering for Duke Theseus' wedding, *Pyramus and Thisby,* now far surpassed by *Pyramids and Disney,* or, as they presume to call it, **Aida**. In its earlier incarnation as *Elaborate Lives* (Atlanta, 1998), it featured a functional pyramid, which had to be scrapped for malfunctioning. I myself would have kept the pyramid, however dysfunctional, and scrapped the show.

The new version, clearly a project by committee, has a book by the schlockmistress Linda Woolverton, the precious playwright David Henry Hwang, and the deep social thinker Robert Falls, who also directed. It avers to have been "suggested by the opera," which, if consulted, could only have suggested, "Get lost!" What *Rent* did to *La Bohème, Aida* the musical does to *Aida* the opera in spades. Not least ludicrous is the happy ending, brazenly purloined from *One Touch of Venus,* whose dorky hero, having lost the goddess herself, hooks up with her human double at a museum. Here, in a museum prologue and epilogue, the present-day reincarnations of Radames and Aida, after stalking each other around the Egyptian collection, lock into a closing clinch.

As heralded by stinkers like *Saturday Night Fever* and *The Civil War,* the undignifiedly Disneyfied *Aida* is that new kind of musical in which nothing much works. But if it can reach the mightiest of target audiences, the ear-brain-and-taste-impaired, it can, borne aloft by Disney's deep pockets, run at least as forever as *Cats.*

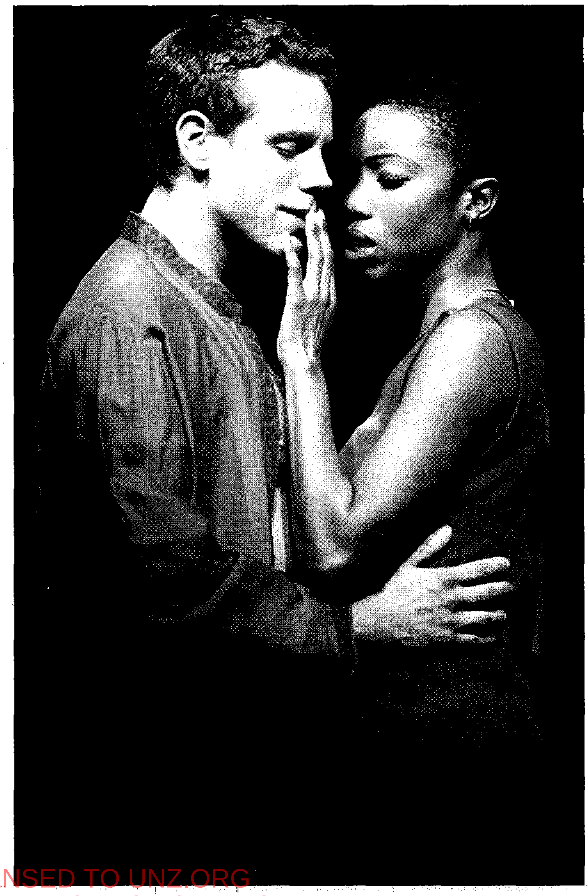
Elton John has concocted a score wherein everything sounds the same—i.e., tuneless, without even enough theatrical savvy to make the particular tunelessness appropriate to the character who mouths it. For the first-act finale, though, he reached for something grander, "The Gods Love Nubia," a sort of hymn or anthem for Aida and her fellow Nubian slaves in an Egyptian internment camp, on whose evidence the gods don't give an old-fashioned rap for Nubia. The arrangers and orchestrators—Paul Bogaev (who also conducts), Steve Margoshes, and Guy Babylon (slightly east of Suez)—have supplied Sir Elton's music with a disco-from-hell beat that manages to make it, to coin a phrase, worse than it sounds. Tim Rice's lyrics, some of which I tried to take down but my hand balked, wallow, perfectly matched, in the same trough as the tunes.

Aida is Heather Headley, ex-lioness from *The Lion King* a tall, angular young woman whose acting consists of feral scowls, whose speaking voice is an ominous growl, and whose singing is a confrontational blend of bellowing and caterwauling. It appears that you can take the girl out of *The Lion King* but not the lioness out of the girl. As Amneris, her rival in love, Sherie René Scott chooses or is directed to impersonate—as Ben Brantley aptly noted—Tori Spelling on *Beverly Hills 90210.*

The Radames, Adam Pascal (formerly of *Rent*), boasts of not having had a single singing or acting lesson, which proves incontestable, and that he has ignored the Puccini and Verdi originals so as not to "taint his ideas"—an unnecessary precaution, as he seems free from anything resembling those. The supporting players, who might have made modest contributions, abstained—perhaps from an excess of modesty.

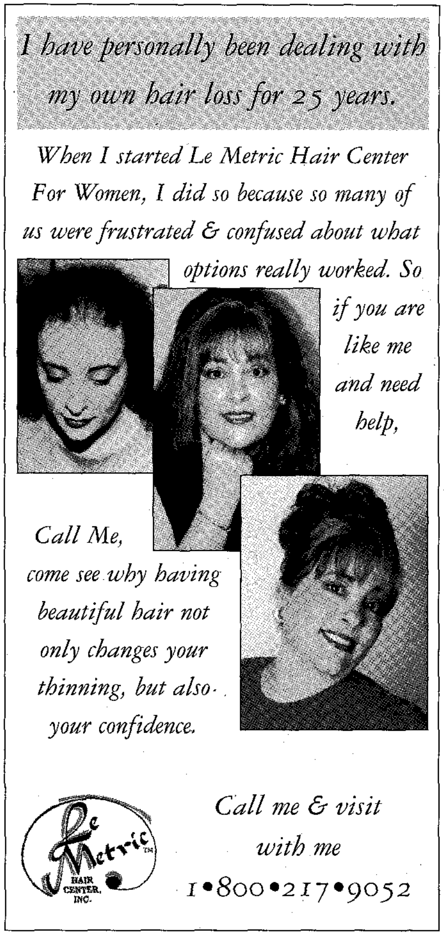
Robert Falls's direction being no help, and Wayne Cilento's MTV-ish choreography being one part Egyptian fresco and nine parts fiasco, it's all up to the production values. Natasha Katz does some impressive and novel things with her lighting, but Bob Crowley's costumes and sets, with two exceptions, are a disaster. Palm trees are fetchingly mirrored in the Nile, and a vertical swimming pool amusingly displays fliers as swimmers. For the rest, the gifted Crowley now seems to think that a production should adapt to him rather than vice versa. His décor would be the pride of one of our classier automobile showrooms; his costumes are Las Vegas Ruritanian, except for a fashion show put on for Amneris by her handmaidens as runway models, which is straight out of Pharaoh Ziegfeld's Nilotic wet dreams.

It is rumored that the true inspiration for *Aida* was



Desert storm: Adam Pascal and Heather Headley in *Aida*.

Photograph by Joan Marcus



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Disney's search for an excuse to market a black doll. If it does not make Hadleyan sounds to frighten little children, it should be a huge success.

Contact HAS FAITHFULLY TRANSFERRED FROM small stage to big at Lincoln Center, its virtues unimpaired, its flaws unrepaired. John Weidman wrote three barely verbal sketches that Susan Stroman choreographed and directed into dances with words. The first, *Swinging,* is an interpretation of a 1768 Fragonard painting to recorded modern music that does not suit it. Neither does Weidman's cutesy plot or Stroman's somewhat coarse choreography.

Did You Move? takes place in a 1954 Queens Italian restaurant, where a mafioso type and his brutalized, repressed wife are cheerlessly dining. The man gripes about the service and bullies his spouse. When he absents himself to get food from remote buffet tables (but why, then, all those waiters, and are the tables in another borough?), the wife, in fantasy, enjoys wild dances with waiters and other diners. But (don't ask me how) these fantasies are somehow also real. Here the recorded classical music works better, and Karen Ziemba is enchanting as the wife. The choreography, though not especially imaginative, is serviceable.

Finally, *Contact,* the longest and best piece. Though well worth the price of admission, it, too, would profit from an apt original score and live orchestra. A successful ad executive in 1999 is bored to death with his life and, despite concerned messages from his shrink and friends on his answering machine, tries to hang himself. He fumbles this and fantasizes two trips to a swing-dancing club, where he falls for a mysterious, highly seductive girl in a yellow dress who dances with everyone and cares for nobody. He also keeps getting messages from a young woman in the apartment below to buy rugs and make her ceiling less noisy. As he botches yet another suicide, who should bang on his door but that downstairs neighbor, and who should she turn out to be?

Weidman's contribution is again dubious but is enough for Stroman's choreography to take flight and do small wonders. Her dancers are all terrific, and Thomas Lynch's set, William Ivey Long's costumes, and Peter Kaczorowski's lighting hit the spot. But the triumph is in the principals. Boyd Gaines, an accomplished actor, proves also a charming dancer and is both droll and touching. And Deborah Yates—as dancer, actress, woman—is irresistible, and Stroman cleverly presents her as both cool in sexy attire and adorable barefoot, hair down, in sleepwear. With Gaines for the ladies and Yates for the gents in amorous entanglement, no spectator leaves shortchanged.

WITH **House Arrest**, ANNA DEAVERE SMITH seems to have outlived her usefulness. Her two previous one-woman theater pieces, *Fires in the Mirror,* about the Crown Heights racial violence, and *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992,* about the Rodney King fracas and aftermath, zeroed in on dire specific dramas seen from various angles through numerous interviews she conducted. The new work is far more prolix, diffuse, and ultimately self-indulgent.

The verbose subtitle gives the vagueness away: *A Search for the American Character in and Around the White House, Past and Present.* The title, *House Arrest,* coyly refers to the presidency: the White House as part imprisonment, part fishbowl for its occupant. If Deavere Smith wanted to record presidential miseries past and present, that might work. But to interview, over five years, 425 people, some of them scarcely or not at all relevant to the ostensible topic, smells of academic boondoggle to me. It allows you to meet some interestingly smart or amusingly obtuse people, and collect all kinds of grant money, while weaving a latter-day Penelope's web, unraveled and recommenced again and again.

So it is that *House Arrest* has been performed in several versions, previously with twelve to fourteen actors, until it reached the current format, which may not yet be definitive. Here the set (by Richard Hoover) is more elaborate than usual for Smith, as are other production values, and Jo Bonney was brought in as directorial consultant, whatever that means. There is now elaborate crosscutting between different interviews, an occasional offstage voice, and artificial dialogues based on actual statements that were made elsewhere to others.

Miss Smith leaves in all the speakers' false starts, unfinished sentences, repetitions, *uhs,* and *ers,* which don't help either clarity or flow. Such matters as Jefferson's relationship with his black slave are given equal weight with Studs Terkel's pontifications or a restaurateur's reminiscences of Jimmy Carter's food choices. Do we need several accounts of Ellen DeGeneres and Anne Heche's visiting the White House? And why the lengthy recollection by an imprisoned black woman of standing by while a brutish husband beat her daughter to death?

Half good as an actress and half good as an impressionist, Miss Smith cannot forge a whole of those disparate halves. But she has garnered her MacArthur "genius" fellowship, two concurrent academic chairs, and occasional movie roles, which should keep her solvent while she diddles away. ■

John Simon's 1997–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

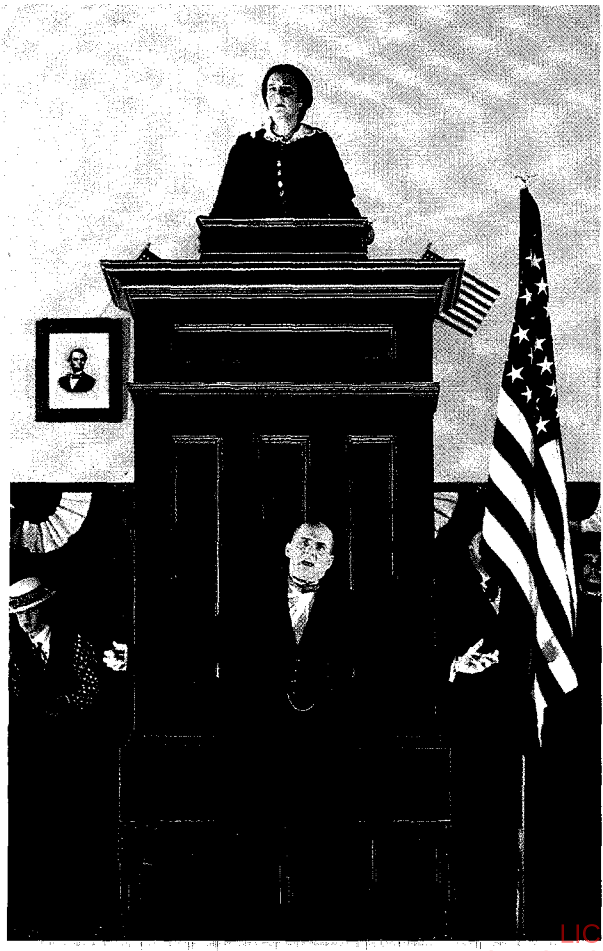
PETER G. DAVIS

Beauty Pageants

At City Opera, 'The Mother of Us All' becomes more than just Americans on parade; maybe Mozart knew what he was doing in 'La Clemenza di Tito.'

SEE THEM WHILE YOU CAN. THAT SEEMS TO BE the message of the City Opera's imported "festival opera" co-productions, short runs of unusual works more likely to attract the adventurous than to draw general audiences. Two such connoisseur items have just flitted in and out of the company's repertory, both presented so superlatively and received so warmly that it seems almost criminal not to bring them back. The first was **The Mother of Us All**, the Virgil Thomson–Gertrude Stein panoramic celebration of Susan B. Anthony's fight for women's voting rights, which had its premiere in 1947 at Columbia University. Actually, this work and the pair's earlier collaboration, *Four Saints in Three Acts,* are among the most frequently performed and highly regarded of all American operas. The fact that it has taken this long for a major New York company to mount a production is, as Stein might say, rather horrible.

Well, perhaps it was worth the wait. Directed by Christopher Alden and designed by Allen Moyer, this *Mother* was first seen two summers ago at Glimmerglass. I enjoyed it there, but I adored it at the State Theater, thanks to a stronger cast, tauter musical direction, and an overall sharpening of the staging. Unlike the free-associative text for *Four Saints, The Mother of Us All* does have a linear progress of sorts, despite its huge cast of historical personages, real and imagined, from Ulysses S. Grant, Daniel Webster, John Adams, and Lillian Russell to Stein and Thomson themselves. Most productions present the work as a loosely organized but colorful pageant of Americana and leave it at that. But Alden has looked deeper into the piece and discovered many wonderful hidden nuggets of wit and wisdom in Stein's virtuoso wordplay and Thomson's colorfully quilted memory-book score of hymns, marches, waltzes, and salty harmonies.



Lauren Flanigan as Susan B. Anthony and Michael Devlin as Daniel Webster in *The Mother of Us All.*

Photograph by Carol Rosegg.

The opera features 26 characters in all; each has at least one chance to shine, and Alden finds precisely the right gesture, expression, or inspired sight gag to define a personality and bring it to theatrical life. He also explores the relationships of the more prominent characters, sometimes with fanciful inventions but without ever betraying the essentially serious nature of the piece—the scene where Susan B. quietly takes Jo the Loiterer aside and explains the differences between rich and poor is positively heartbreaking. Nor is Alden afraid of highlighting, in the warmest and most natural ways, the gay subtext clearly indicated by Stein for Anthony, her companion Anne, and their obsessive acolyte Isabel Wentworth. Moyer's sets provide an enchanting acting space: Susan B. does her work in a cozy nineteenth-century drawing room–study while Webster conducts his pompous orations, Russell performs her ditsy music-hall routines, and Adams stiffly woos Constance Fletcher in a public area resembling a country schoolhouse, a reminder that we are being treated to the most deliciously entertaining lesson in American history.

The City Opera's resident diva, Lauren Flanigan, embodied the mother of us all to perfection—I doubt if the part has ever had a more vivid or committed interpreter. The sheer intensity of feeling and firmness of purpose that drove the real Anthony was present in her every word, note, and movement, although I am still waiting for a Susan B. who can effortlessly float those pianissimo high G's at the moving final scene. A few more firmer voices onstage, in fact, would not have been amiss, and perhaps the orchestra under George Manahan was a rehearsal or two away from the ideal. No matter. I've seen quite a few *Mothers* in my day, and even coached one myself in college. But the City Opera's is definitely the one Stein and Thomson must have dreamed about.

THE CITY OPERA'S NEXT FESTIVE OFFERING WAS MOZART'S **La Clemenza di Tito**, a work only recently upgraded and now securely ranked

(continued on page 94)

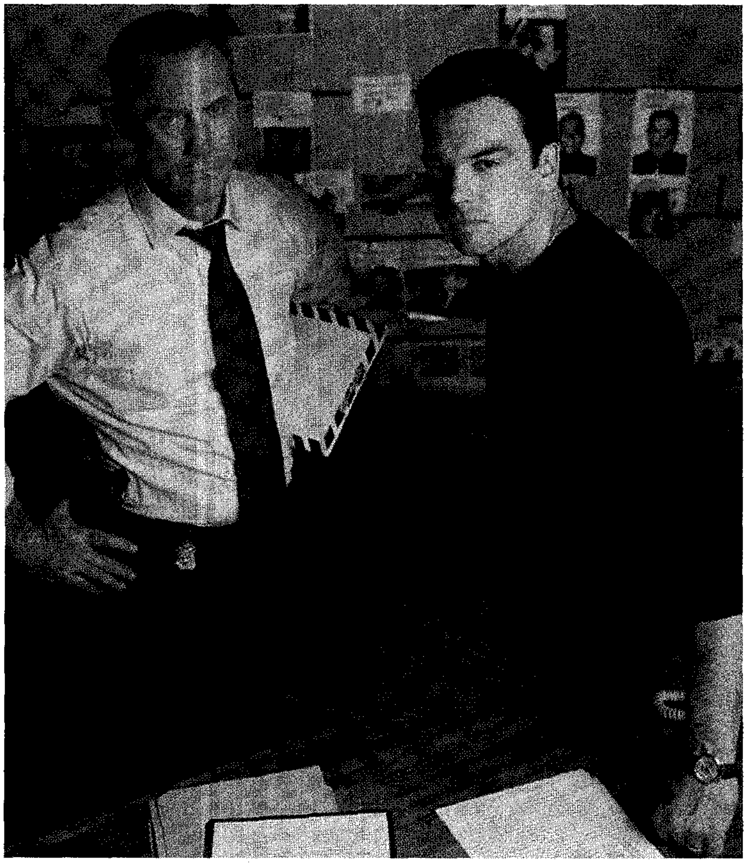
TELEVISION

JOHN LEONARD

Whacks Works

Don't let the familiarity of subject—another inside-the-mob job—turn you off to CBS's surprisingly well-made (if surprisingly glum) 'Falcone.'

Postponed last fall on account of gratuitous violence in the middle of a national guilt trip about the Columbine High School shootout and other deadly gunplays, here at last is **Falcone** (Tuesday, April 4; 9 to 11 P.M.; April 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12, 10 to 11 P.M.; CBS), in which an FBI agent goes undercover in the New York mob every night of the coming week except next Sunday—and we are entitled to wonder why.



Analyze this: Robert John Burke and Jason Gedrick in *Falcone*.

Not about Sunday. That's easy. There's already an FBI agent undercover Sunday nights on the USA Network. But why another Mafia show? Besides getting a second season of *The Sopranos,* we've been asked to waste television time with wiseguys in Mario Puzo's *The Last Don,* parts I and II, and in *Bella Mafia,* about Black Sicilian Widows; *Witness to the Mob,* so Sammy "The Bull" Gravano could rat out his buddies again; *Lansky,* who got kicked out of picky Israel; and *Bonanno,* so the mobster could explain the Kennedy assassination. We've been encouraged to believe that Danny Aiello, Kirstie Alley, Beverly D'Angelo, Illeana Douglas, Richard Dreyfuss, Dennis Farina, Nastassja Kinski, Martin Landau, Anthony LaPaglia, Tony Lo Bianco, Costas Mandylor, Joe Mantegna, Debi Mazar, Edward James Olmos, Eric Roberts, Vanessa Redgrave (!), Tom Sizemore, Jennifer Tilly, Nicholas Turturro, Frankie Valli, and Abe Vigoda are mob-connected. We've been to Long Island, Las Vegas, Havana, and Palermo—not to mention that Brigadoon for organized-crime families, the Witness Protection Program. And Bugsy Siegel is still dead.

My guess is that CBS thinks it owes Jason Gedrick something. He was the "good seed" in both Puzos. He should have been a star in *EZ Streets,* but nobody watched. He became instead an evil clone in *The Third Twin.* Perhaps feeling that he's more than made his bones, the network surrounds him with savvy executive producers. It supports him with actors like Patti LuPone and Eric Roberts. And it sends this crime-fighting married (to Amy Carlson) man with two young daughters (Delanie Fitzpatrick and Sarah Hyland) undercover as "Joe Falcone," a jewel thief from Miami who has to play cards, shoot pool, grunt in monosyllables, and handle the wheel for an ambivalent lowlife like Sonny Napoli (Titus Welliver) in the middle of the Wars of Succession to determine the next underboss of lower Manhattan.

Because Jason feels his own pain at least as much as he feels anyone else's, the energy has to come from somewhere else. That somewhere else is Welliver's Napoli. It's a career-making performance, like Kevin Spacey's as Mel Profitt in *Wiseguy,* the series *Falcone* most resembles. The son of a mobster who was whacked for betraying his comrades, who in his turn will be asked to whack his own uncle, Sonny Napoli is violent but cerebral, loyal but skeptical, shadowed, as it were, by another self he could have been in a different world. We see both of these selves, the one watching the other with a kind of bipolar detachment. We're obviously meant to contrast Sonny's bipolarity with Joe's double life, his schizoid masquerade. And because *Falcone* is inspired by the 1997 movie *Donnie Brasco,* we'll also know in advance that Joe will fall into a sort of Leslie Fiedler love with Sonny—not to get into his mixed feelings about another Napoli, Sonny's sister Dede (Marisa Ryan), whose autistic child causes so much of Sonny's introspection.

Falcone is as well cast as it's well made. Don't miss the Tuesday two-hour debut, or you will miss the brief return of Karen Sillas as a racket-busting assistant district attorney, who is almost immediately replaced by Patti LuPone. (I don't know why, but Patti's good, too.) As a mob boss in prison, Eric Roberts is crazy again, but this time he's supposed to be; everybody says so. Carlson as Joe's frazzled wife, Maggie; Robert John Burke as his worrywart FBI caseworker; and Bobby Costanza as the Uncle Jackie whom Sonny is supposed to whack all buy into their fugitive roles in this netherworld with a con-

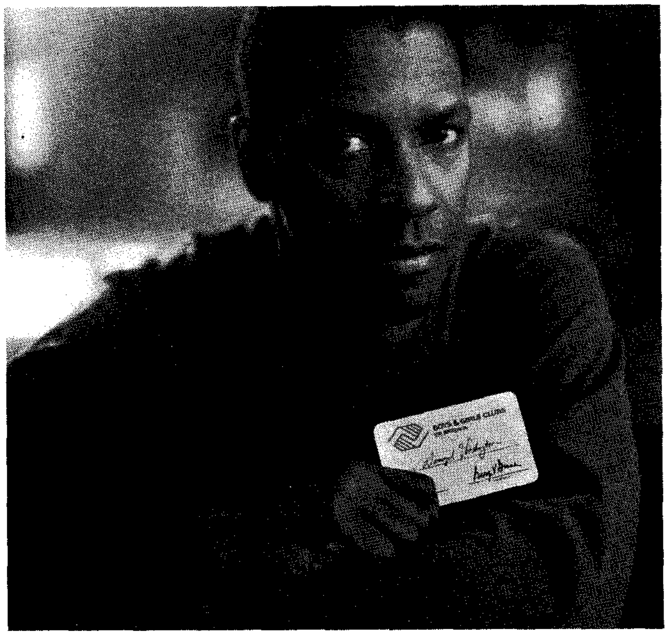
Photograph by Monty Brinton/CBS.

viction bordering on genuine enthusiasm. It is also, however, glum, even with the usual colorful motley of Jimmy Suits, Sammy Coke Bottles, and Sally Soaps. These mafiosi are men whose merriment would have to be measured with an electron microscope. Life in their "social club" looks to be about as much fun as Sartre's *No Exit.* Whacking people is the way they punctuate their tedium. So why, again, are we watching?

Frankly, I've reviewed so many of these Mafia movies and mini-series that all my theories are out of gas. I suggest you pick up a copy of the March 20 radical biweekly *In These Times,* in which Bill Boisvert discourses at witty length on our love affair with *The Sopranos.* According to Boisvert, the old mob fought "a doomed battle against the dehumanizing effects of the market by creating an alternative economy, structured around personal honor and clan solidarity" that was "done in by the very dynamic of greed it [sought] to harness." What Tony Soprano represents, in a bathrobe or an SUV or a bear hug, is suburban flight to a New Jersey where "the Old Mafia's misgivings about modernity have been allayed by the New Mafia's embrace of management theory." Thus, not only is consumerism "really the only authentic mode of being in the world," but there is "nothing wrong with the Mafia that a leadership seminar couldn't cure." Now you know.

In brief: JOHN LITHGOW AS THE MAN OF LA Mancha, Bob Hoskins as Sancho Panza, Isabella Rossellini as the Duchess, and Vanessa Williams as Dulcinea play Miguel de Cervantes for laughs in **Don Quixote** (Sunday, April 9; 8 to 10:30 P.M.; TNT). This seems to have been deliberate on the part of John Mortimer, who adapted the novel, and Peter Yates, who directs. Even the windmills look silly, and so do the sheep. I am not offended, but wasn't the musical funny enough? . . . And speaking of musicals, public television's sick infatuation with Andrew Lloyd Webber will achieve a giddy apogee with an entire evening devoted to extolling his bountifulness that kicks off with a new production of the very first collaboration of the composer with lyricist Tim Rice, **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** (Wednesday, April 5; 8 to 9:30 P.M.: Channel 13). Donny Osmond, with great good humor, stars as the pre-Freudian dream interpreter Joseph, but the show is stopped by Robert Torti doing the Pharaoh as a Las Vegas Elvis, and stolen in every scene she's in by Maria Friedman as the saucy Narrator. Never mind Jesus and Evita. Before he became important, Lord Lloyd Webber was actually delightful.

John Leonard's 1997–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.



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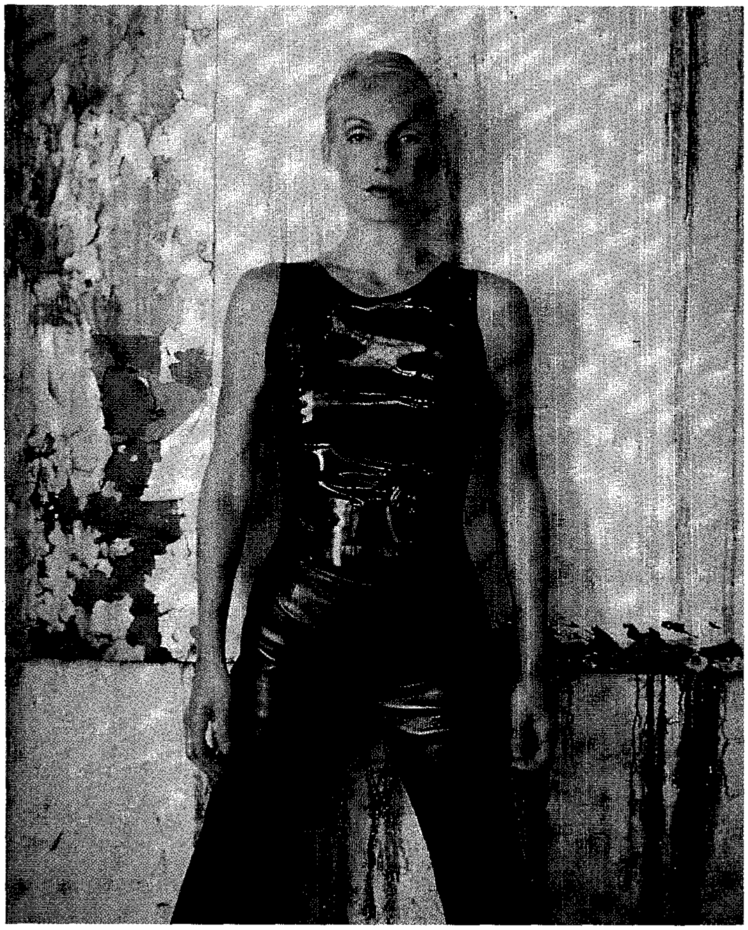
POP MUSIC ETHAN BROWN

Willkommen

Cabaret and 'Cabaret' star Ute Lemper invites a new generation into the genre by singing Costello and Cave.



Absolutely Weill: German cabaret star Ute Lemper.

OVER ITS BACKDROP OF TIME-TESTED STANDARDS, cabaret is constantly faced with the challenge of reinventing itself. Münster, Germany–born Ute Lemper isn't the only singer currently engaged in dragging the genre out of its roots in Gershwin standards—Audra McDonald, among others, is championing young composers and obscure songs—but she's certainly the most striking. Commanding listeners' attention with the intensity of a dominatrix, she uses the genre's almost unbearable intimacy to embrace the Weimar tradition of cabaret as confrontation, sometimes peppering her shows with denunciations of the far right in Germany.

Lemper's star-making role was her seductive turn as Velma in *Chicago,* but the conservative worlds of cabaret and musical theater haven't provided appropriate vehicles for her outsize talent. Her recorded work, which hit its low point with an album of songs by New Agey composer Michael Nyman, hasn't been much better. So on **Punishing Kiss** (Decca/Universal Classics), Lemper has turned for material—and inspiration—to maverick pop songwriters like Elvis Costello, Nick Cave, Tom Waits, and the Divine Comedy's Neil Hannon. As much as McDonald, Lemper is throwing down the gauntlet for nontraditional songwriters, but in a way that challenges more than it comforts. She also makes a case for Costello and Cave as the true inheritors of the ironic, world-weary cynicism of Cole Porter and Kurt Weill.

On Costello's "Punishing Kiss," Lemper assumes the honeyed, deceivingly docile voice of a bored, soap-opera-obsessed housewife (perhaps the descendant of the bored, thriller-obsessed housewife of his "Watching the Detectives"?) who confesses, "I favor a good punishing kiss / it helps pass the lonely afternoons." On "Little Water Song" by Nick Cave, whose songs share Weill's funereal humor, Lemper sings as a woman being drowned by her lover, "Under here, they've given me starfish for eyes!," repeating "under here" until she submits to futility. Over an ominous string arrangement, Lemper sings as though she's both infuriated and vulnerable (in a way that Cave, with his pitch-black baritone, never could be), and her phrasing grows more desperate as her situation gets more dire.

Though Costello and Cave are big names, it's the lesser-known Hannon who makes the most noticeable impression. His band, the Divine Comedy, backs Lemper on the entire album, and its swelling arrangements dramatically blend stylized keyboards with sweeping orchestrations. Hannon's songs are absurdly camp ("My only crime was passion wild and uncontrolled," Lemper howls on Hannon's "The Case Continues." "If sex were an Olympic sport we would have won the gold"), but they fit in with Lemper's punk-inspired mission of rattling cabaret's cage.

At its best, cabaret has always drawn its emotional pull from the shadowy side of the human psyche. With *Punishing Kiss,* Lemper proves that the music's heart of darkness thrives not only in Rodgers & Hart but in Costello and Cave.

In brief: The then-lowbrow shotgun wedding of dub reggae and hip-hop that gave birth to drum 'n' bass in the early nineties could never happen in today's serious dance-music scene, where every D.J. has an auteur complex. But on **Green Velvet** (F-111/Warner Bros.), the Chicago-based producer of the same name delivers techno that's both innovative and wickedly absurd. Over strafing percussion that gives his thumping beats an unusually funky kick, Green Velvet cackles mischievously as he offers a guided tour of the rave scene for outsiders unfamiliar with its pharmacology ("Flash") and replays voice mails from ex-girlfriends and angry landlords ("Answering Machine"). He's the new mad professor of electronica, hopped up on his own nuttiness.

Ethan Brown's 1999–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com.**

Photograph by Lorenzo Agius

RESTAURANTS HAL RUBENSTEIN

Day for Night

Everybody knows about lunch at The Four Seasons, but nobody ever talks about dinner. Given its new spring menu and revitalized chef, more should.

SHE LOVES IT AT LUNCH. CALL HER ON A MOMENT'S notice and she cancels an oxygen facial at Bliss without hesitation to meet you there. Never late, she enters this den of lion kings wide-eyed as Simba, sliding onto a chaise with a sense of anticipation matched only by a wedding guest who already knows which plate has the card for the centerpiece beneath it. In a whisper, her body vibrating like a tuning fork, she exults. "It is *the best,*" she says. "Tell me another room that feels like this. Anywhere. Where you sense everything going on, like somebody's plugged you in. Plus the sea urchin is to die for." A ramekin of caviar-topped whipped urchin appears without asking. One taste. She swoons. "There is nothing like **The Four Seasons**. *Nothing!*" And then, licking her seafood sundae while lifting herself as if to bask in the glow of the walnut paneling, she muses, "I wonder what it's like to eat here at night." Huh?

She's not the only one lunching here without a clue. The Four Seasons is possessed by a strange phenomenon: Its loyalists are a fiercely cultish clientele of inverted vampires. When the sun is high, they come to jostle and juggle the realms of media and money, combining and realigning New York's balances of power while picking out the crystallized lavender from towers of cotton candy the house sends out readily, like air kisses, to its favorites. But by moonlight, the wiggy confections herald repeated chantings of "Happy Birthday" (one night there were five renditions) at tables full of people Michael Wolff and Michael Musto never write about, people who are more likely to covet a reservation at the Russian Tea Room than one at Babbo.

True, dinner reservations aren't even taken for later than 9:15. But still, sunset's last rays reflecting off the rippling chain curtains and suspended metallic forests turn Philip Johnson's two stunningly urbane, matchless rooms even more golden than usual. After dark, the light in the Pool Room (the area of choice at night; the Grill stars during the day) seems to come from nowhere, as if suspended bowls of tulips and the famous quartet of pool-framing trees (alas, why are they always fake?) were phosphorescent. Even votive candles don't appear like a cheap idea. It really is astounding that the same man responsible for the New York State Theater (is it worth spending a quarter of a billion dollars to renovate buildings that someone once characterized as "Monumental Temporary"?) and the Ethan Allen–inspired Sony Building could have designed a space so emblematic of fifties modernism yet so intimidatingly perfect in design. Even after 40 years, no other restaurateur has dared riff on it, or rip it off.

Few have lifted the recipes either. Quality of ingredients aside, Season's cuisine was always stolidly "continental," as squarely flourish-free as the room. The success of The Four Seasons used to be planted in its refusal to change. It was a brilliantly engineered, impeccably staffed snow job.

With so many willing to go sledding, why make changes? Yet in the five years since the tirelessly and effortlessly gracious Julian Niccolini and Alex von Bidder took over the house, there have been many. Most significant is how Christian Albin, chef for over two decades, has emerged as a culinary Rip van Winkle, reawakening what was once too-familiar fare with subtle but surprisingly adventurous new flavors and often marvelous pairings.

During winter, the menu offered an octopus carpaccio sliced thin as a jewel box's mother-of-pearl veneer, with a dash of cilantro and rice vinegar, the best dish of its kind I'd ever had. It's been replaced for spring by a slightly thicker, uncharacteristically brash abalone in a tangy yuzu-oba sauce. Octopus still turns up in a seviche trio, but it's actually the weakest element next to the sea bass and scallops. Sea-urchin roe also accompanies refreshing slices of hamachi, their airy delicacy highlighted by a spry sprinkling of sour-plum vinaigrette. Warmly inviting pockets of veal agnolotti have a zealously hearty sauce of

Four play: The Four Seasons' Pool Room, and its seviche trio of sea bass, scallops, and octopus.

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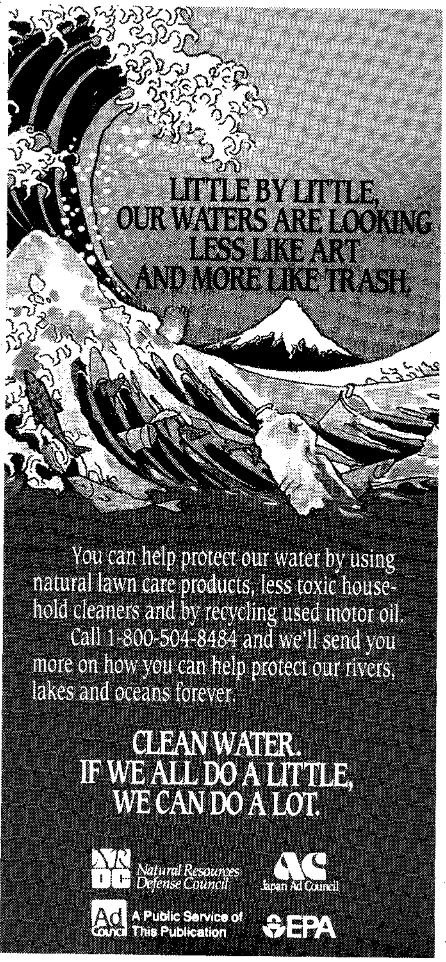
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basil, peas, and Pecorino. With less oil and more pepper, tuna carpaccio with fennel would be equally good. The lighthearted chilled pea soup with Maryland crabmeat leaves you eager for a picnic. Spicy chicken dumplings in a ginger-chili broth, my favorite winter dish, now turn up in aromatic yet light mushroom consommé, but it's not the same. Perhaps I can bury my sorrow under a delightful sautéed foie gras in a completely non-cloying winelike strawberry glaze, or a rapturously dense rabbit–and–foie gras terrine. Or both.

Albin's crisp farmhouse duck and rack of lamb stir too many memories of the bland way things used to be here, but the tender roasted baby lamb, swathed in pink lentils and couscous, is sensual and soothing. A loin of spring rabbit pan-roasted with chanterelles and accompanied by polenta with texture and presence is just as welcoming. Sauteed bison in foie gras–and–shallot sauce is simply irresistible. Roast suckling pig might evoke the same lip-smacking if it wasn't such a chintzy portion. Soft-shell crabs with a neat tweak of hazelnut set the bar for anything you will find at the shore this summer. And though tuna mignon is gorgeously red and woefully taste-free, Dover sole meunière, a dish once discarded by new cuisine, shows up flaky, crisp-skinned, and far more interesting than all those desperate attempts to transform John Dory into something more interesting than the fish-stick fodder it is.

Desserts remain a little fussy. Strawberry-rhubarb strudel and strawberry-pistachio semifreddo are way too ephemeral, hazelnut dome too pallid, the house fancy cake too fancy. But coconut blancmange, chocolate-velvet cake, ice creams, and sherbets are all sublime, and dessert chutney with sweet mâche and tarragon ice cream will do as the most exhilarating way to end a meal until they open the Cyclone next month.

"I've never gone on the Cyclone," my satiated lunch regular says. "Will I love it? Coney Island, right? I have a Metro pass. We should go." How about ending up at The Four Seasons for dinner? "Two things I've never tried in one night. Scary. We'll see." If you haven't done either, don't wait as long as she will. The Cyclone opens in April. You can call The Four Seasons right now. It's beautiful there in the spring. Especially at night.

The Four Seasons (99 East 52nd Street, 212-754-9494). Lunch, Monday through Friday, noon to 2:15 P.M.; dinner, Monday through Friday, 5 P.M. to 9:30 P.M., Saturday, dinner only, 5 P.M. to 11 P.M. Appetizers, $15 to $27; entrées, $32 to $55. All major credit cards. ▬

Hal Rubenstein's 1998–2000 reviews are available at **newyorkmag.com**.

Davis *continued from page 89*

among the composer's mature masterpieces. Not so long ago, it was generally considered that even Mozart nodded here, inexplicably wasting his precious time on a stiff, old-fashioned opera seria–type libretto after three miraculous collaborations with Lorenzo Da Ponte. Now we can see just how ingeniously he loosened and reshaped the formal patterns of seria to create an original piece of music theater in some ways even more advanced than *Don Giovanni.* In Mozart's hands, the story of how the Roman emperor Titus pardoned his close friend and would-be political assassin, Sesto, becomes a disturbing morality play full of question marks. Picture a Julius Caesar recovered from his murderous assault to confront a repentant Brutus, who must painfully work out the consequences of his actions.

Director Stephen Wadsworth takes this view of *Tito,* runs with it, and for the first time in my experience turns the opera into a powerfully moving human drama. Updating the action to 1791, the year of Mozart's death and when the work was composed, adds little, but Wadsworth's handling of one-on-one relationships—*personenregie,* in opera talk—is inspired. All the characters now play a key role in the drama, and each faces up to his or her moral responsibility in different ways, with Tito and Sesto at the center of the dilemma. Their reconciliation is hard-won—so much so, in fact, that when the curtain falls on the final happy resolution, one wonders if anyone onstage will ever fully recover from such deep wounds.

Sesto is understandably the most tortured of all, a fact made abundantly clear by the quiet intensity of Lorraine Hunt Lieberson's luminous acting and singing. Although announced as battling a viral infection, Hunt Lieberson traced Sesto's two big arias with the firmly centered tone and refined phrasing one expects from this treasurable singer, while Kurt Streit as Tito was no less dramatically engaged or vocally polished. Apart from occasional trouble at the top of her soprano, Marie Plette was most effective as the scheming Vitellia, and I could detect nothing but excellence from Laura Tucker (Annio), Tracy Dahl (Servilia), and Jake Gardner (Publio). A seventh important solo voice came from the orchestra: Laura Flax, who played the prominent clarinet and basset-horn solos exquisitely. Indeed, the orchestral playing under Harry Bicket's precise musical direction was satisfying in every way. More, please. ▬

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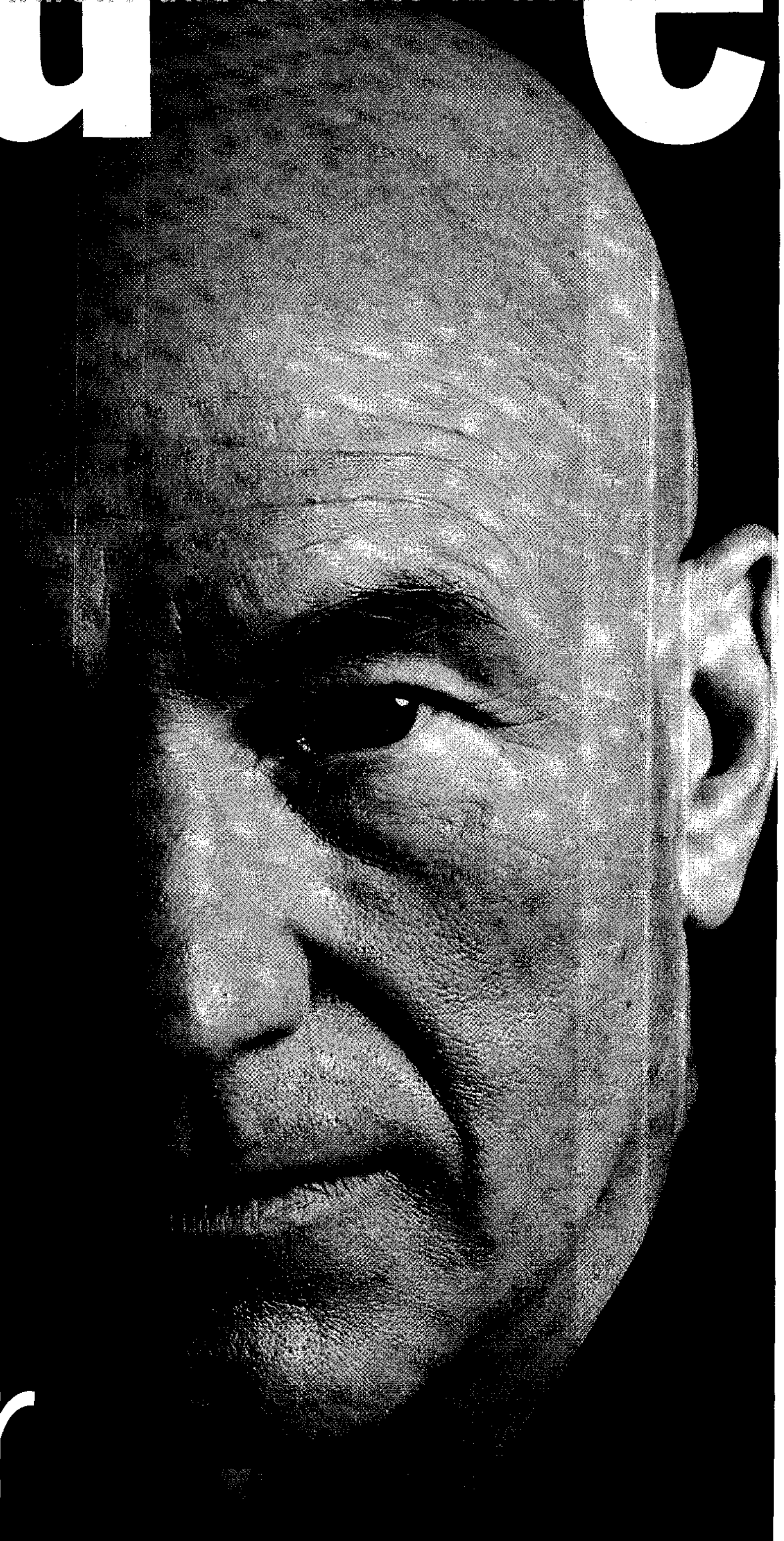
cue

A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York



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Liar, Liar

Captain Picard, a.k.a. **Patrick Stewart,** plays a bigamist unmasked in Arthur Miller's *Ride Down Mt. Morgan* (page 105)

movies

East-West...Joe Gould's Secret...Me Myself I

New Films

★**All About My Mother**—Pedro Almodóvar's movie about a mother, magnificently played by Cecilia Roth, who becomes a caregiver to an entire carnival of lost souls is his best in years. In Spanish with English subtitles. (Rainer; 11/29/99) (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; CC Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

American Beauty—Kevin Spacey plays a middle-aged zero living out a life of quiet desperation in spic-and-span suburbia with a harridan real-estate-agent wife (Annette Bening) and morose daughter (Thora Birch) who despise him. Sam Mendes, celebrated for his direction of *Cabaret* and *The Blue Room* on stage, makes his movie debut; the script is by Alan Ball. (Rainer; 9/20/99) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Clearview's Ziegfeld; Loews State; Clearview's Beekman; UA East; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Loews 84th Street; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Marboro; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Beautiful People—The lives of several very different Londoners—an aristocratic nurse, a troubled doctor, a Serbian pianist, a shell-shocked Scottish documentarian, and a teenage heroin addict—all intertwine while the war in Bosnia rages not that far away. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

★**Being John Malkovich**—This debut feature from director Spike Jonze and screenwriter Charlie Kaufman is a stunning piece of metaphysical vaudeville. John Cusack plays a dejected puppeteer who, working as a file clerk, discovers in the wall of his office a portal leading directly into the head of John Malkovich. Cameron Diaz and Catherine Keener fill out the spectacular cast. (Rainer; 11/8/99) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Clearview's Waverly.*

Beyond the Mat—Barry Blaustein's behind-the-scenes documentary about professional wrestlers shows off their circus-like world but also plays up the sobbiness underneath. Blaustein is a bit too starry-eyed about these carny con men. (Rainer; 3/27/00) *UA Union Square.*

Black and White—James Toback directed this improv ensemble piece on New Yorkers and race relations—*Do the Right Thing* meets *Blue in the Face*—co-starring Bijou Phillips, Ben Stiller, Mike Tyson, Method Man, and many, many more. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Clearview's Chelsea; Nova; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Ridgewood.*

★**Boiler Room**—This debut feature from writer-director Ben Younger is, at least until the heavy moralizing and Freudianizing set in, a terrific thrill ride through the underworld of a chop-shop brokerage house. Giovanni Ribisi is the trainee who learns to swim with the sharks. (Rainer; 2/28/00) (2 hrs. 1 min.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews State; Sony Lincoln Square.*

★**Boys Don't Cry**—Directed by first-timer Kimberly Peirce, the film is about Teena Brandon, who, as Brandon Teena, passed as a boy, romanced the girls, and was killed for her deceptions by two ex-cons in Nebraska in 1993. Oscar-winning Hilary Swank plays Brandon. (Rainer; 10/18/99) (1 hr. 54 mins.; R) *Quad Cinema; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; UA Criterion; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square; BAM Rose Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Cider House Rules—Michael Caine, Delroy Lindo, and Tobey Maguire star in Lasse Hallström's sweet coming-of-ager, based on the novel by John Irving. (2 hrs. 11 mins.; PG-13) *CC Angelika Film Center; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Crown Gotham; UA Criterion; Clearview's Chelsea; Sony Lincoln Square; BAM Rose Cinemas; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

The Color of Paradise—A blind 8-year-old Iranian boy, shunned by his father, must learn his trade and much more from a blind carpenter to whom he's been apprenticed. In Persian with English subtitles. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Crane World—Argentine director Pablo Trapero's feature debut is about Rulo, a beer-bellied, unemployed one-hit rock star who aspires to be a crane operator. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 30 mins.; NR) *Opens 4/7 at the Screening Room.*

Drowning Mona—A black comedy in which Bette Midler plays an obnoxious woman who turns up in the local fishing pond, and Danny Devito is the small-town sheriff investigating her supposed murder. Trouble is, everyone in the whole town wanted her dead. (1 hr. 31 mins.; PG-13) *CO Worldwide Cinemas; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

★**The End of the Affair**—This Neil Jordan adaptation of Graham Greene's 1951 sin-and-redemption novel has a hushed, spectral atmosphere that, at times, resembles *Brief Encounter* crossed with *Tales From the Crypt*. It's an impressive, and oppressive, achievement, featuring Ralph Fiennes as an acidulous novelist in torrid, soulful involvement with the wife (Julianne Moore) of a meek civil servant (Stephan Rea). (Rainer; 12/13/99) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *UA Gemini.*

Erin Brockovich—Julia Roberts plays a cleavage-enhanced, tough-talking, sparsely educated, divorced mother who also spearheads an investigation leading to the largest payoff ever made in a direct-action lawsuit in this intermittently enjoyable crusading-underdog movie directed by Steven Soderbergh. For a while, it promises to be something more than conventional; it has a nice, uncondescending feel for the little moments that make up little lives. (Rainer; 3/27/00) (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; Loews New York Twin; Clearview's Metro Cinema; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

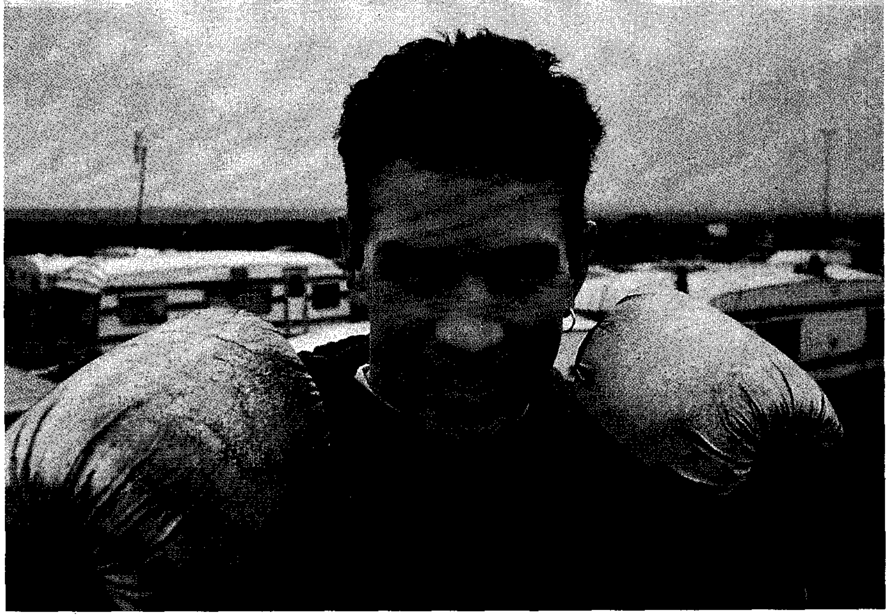
Fantasia/2000—A restored print of "The Sorcerer's Apprentice" and seven other animated extravaganzas set to the sounds of the Chicago Symphony. (1 hr. 25 mins.; G) *Sony Lincoln Square's IMAX.*

The Filth and the Fury—Julien Temple creates yet another documentary about the Sex Pistols, this time without letting Malcolm McLaren take all the

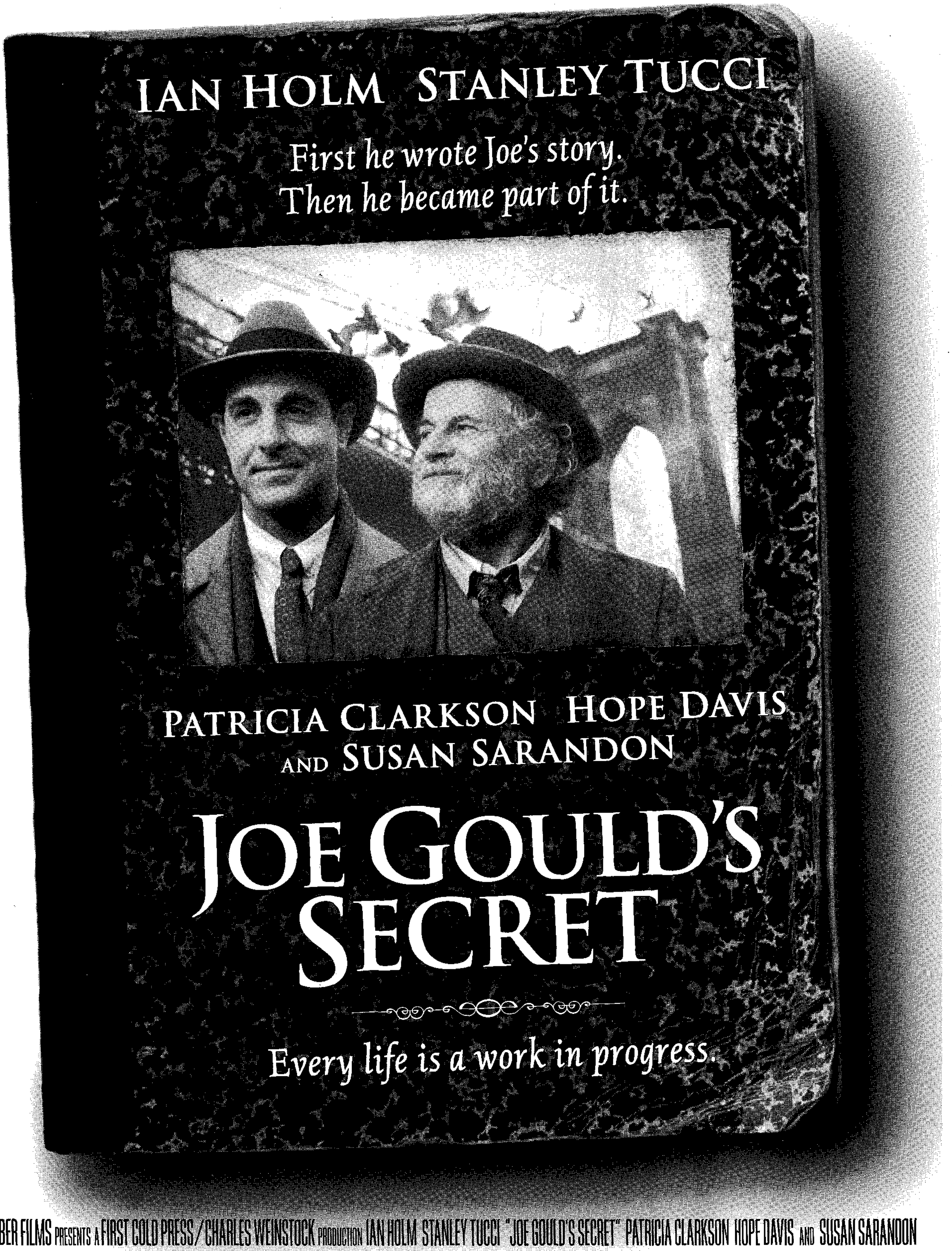
Previews

Pride and Prejudice

Like Romani Gypsies in the rest of Europe, Irish Travellers are an ethnically distinct, itinerant tribe who still endure poverty and persistent discrimination. In *Southpaw*, documentary filmmaker Liam McGrath follows the rare accomplishments of amateur boxer Francis Barrett (pictured), who at 19 became the first Traveller to represent Ireland in the Olympics and, after moving to London, went after the English title as well. Opens April 7 at Loews State.



'Cue' cover photograph by Michael O'Neill/Corbis Outline.



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SELECT ENGAGEMENTS START APRIL 7TH

Previews

Dr. Do Nothing

The heyday of the Village, the reporter-source relationship, the decline of the Wasp, and the death of bohemia—there isn't much that the late Joseph Mitchell's two classic 'New Yorker' stories on "Professor Seagull" are not about. In 'Joe Gould's Secret,' actor-director Stanley Tucci (playing Mitchell, above left, with Ian Holm as Joe Gould) dramatizes the long, uneasy friendship between the famous storyteller and Gould, the erudite bum who claimed to have written the longest book in the world. Opens April 7.

credit. New concert footage and an interview with Sid and Nancy, may they rest in peace. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Film Forum.*

Final Destination—A young man gets a premonition and tells his friends that their plane is going to crash. They don't get on, but they die anyway. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Waverly; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Sutton; Loews Astor Plaza; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Cinemart; Jackson Triplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; Brooklyn Heights.*

Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai—Forest Whitaker gives a resonant and affecting performance as a hit man who pores over ancient samurai texts in this allusive Jim Jarmusch movie that is by turns irritating and inviting. (Rainer; 3/20/00) (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Clearview's 59th Street East; Loews State; BAM Rose Cinemas.*

Girl, Interrupted—*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* meets *Clueless.* With Winona Ryder and Angelina Jolie. (2 hrs. 3 mins.; R) *UA Union Square.*

Here on Earth—Chris Klein is a Princeton-bound Massachussets prep-school brat, Leelee Sobieski his townie romantic interest, and Josh Hartnett her salt-of-the-earth boyfriend in this teen love-triangle drama turned tearjerker. (1 hr. 38 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; UA Criterion; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's Park and 86th St.; UA Gemini; Clearview's 62nd and Broadway; Bay Plaza; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

★**High Fidelity**—See Rainer, page 85. *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 19th St. East; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; UA Criterion; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Clearview's Cobble Hill; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Holy Smoke—Kate Winslet is an Australian girl who falls under a guru's spell while traveling in India. Harvey Keitel plays the cult deprogrammer who gets caught up in the swirl. The film, directed by Jane Campion, becomes more and more absurd as it plays itself out. (Rainer; 12/13/99) (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *The Screening Room.*

★**The Hurricane**—Denzel Washington gives a powerhouse performance as Rubin "Hurricane" Carter in this film about the middleweight contender's fight for exoneration after he was wrongfully arrested on a murder rap and imprisoned for almost nineteen years. The entire film needed to be as ferocious as Washington's performance. (Rainer; 1/10/00) (2 hrs. 26 mins.; R) *UA Criterion; Clearview's Cobble Hill.*

★**The Insider**—Al Pacino plays Lowell Bergman, a producer for *60 Minutes,* and Russell Crowe is Jeffrey Wigand, the reluctant tobacco-company whistle-blower whom Bergman coaxed into spilling the beans in an interview with Mike Wallace, only to have the show nixed by CBS higher-ups. (Rainer; 11/15/99) (2 hrs. 37 mins.; R) *UA Union Square.*

Kadosh—The story of two sisters who live in Mea Sharim, Jerusalem's ultra-orthodox Jewish quarter, and whose lives and marriages are dictated by the strict, hermetic community. In Hebrew with English subtitles. (1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Long Night's Journey Into Day—This South African documentary—winner of Sundance's Grand Jury Prize—examines the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the nation's attempt to forgive the deeds of the past by refusing to forget them. (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

Magnolia—*Boogie Nights* writer-director Paul Thomas Anderson is extravagantly gifted, but this San Fernando Valley–based epic of alienation comes across like a concatenation of soap-opera stories. A remarkable cast, including Julianne Moore, Jason Robards, and William H. Macy, is featured in mostly unremarkable settings. (Rainer; 1/10/00) (3 hrs. 15 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; CC Sutton; Clearview's Chelsea.*

Mifune—A strange and amusing film about a successful businessman (Anders W. Berthelsen) who moves back to his rural hometown to care for his retarded, middle-aged brother after their father's death. *Rain Man* meets *Pretty Woman* meets the Danish New Wave. In Danish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 38 mins.; R) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Mission to Mars—Brian De Palma directs this futuristic space odyssey about a recovery mission that discovers traces of life on the red planet. Great effects with extra cheese. Stars Gary Sinise, Tim Robbins, Connie Neilson, and Don Cheadle. (tk; PG) *UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's Olympia; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Cinemart; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

My Dog Skip—The late Willie Morris's best-selling memoir about his growing up in Mississippi with his beloved fox terrier, Skip, is now a sweet, warm family film (starring Kevin Bacon, Diane Lane, and Frankie Muniz) about a boy growing up in Mississippi with a Jack Russell terrier. (1 hr. 35 mins.; PG) *UA Union Square; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Ninth Gate—Roman Polanski's latest is about a New York book dealer, played by Johnny Depp, who tracks down for his client (Frank Langella) a series of rare books claiming to invoke the devil. Much of it is claptrap, but there are occasional brilliant oddments. (Rainer; 3/20/00) (2 hrs. 7 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Chelsea; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

★**Not One Less**—A small, affecting fable from Zhang Yimou about a thirteen-year-old substitute village schoolteacher who goes into the city to find one of her errant pupils. The village scenes and the city scenes have a mysterious connectedness. Together they seem to take in the whole quotidian experience. (Rainer; 2/21/00) (1 hr. 46 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; Kew Gardens Cinemas.*

Pitch Black—Vin Diesel, Radha Mitchell, and Cole Hauser are marooned in space on a strange, hot, *seemingly* lifeless planet. Just wait until dark. (1 hr. 47 mins.; R) *UA Union Square.*

Price of Glory—Jimmy Smits is Arturo Ortega, a former boxer who once had a shot at the world championship, but now lives vicariously through his three sons, whom he trains to become championship boxers. (PG-13) *CC Village East; CC Murray Hill Cinemas; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Chelsea; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Nova; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Clearview's Cobble Hill; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Ridgewood; Centre Sunnyside; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Kew Gardens Cinemas; Plaza; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Ready to Rumble—David Arquette and Scott Caan are losers obsessed with professional wrestling who try to coax champion Jimmy King (Oliver Platt) out of retirement. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Opens 4/7.*

Return to Me—David Duchovny is a widowed architect who meets and romances Minnie Driver, playing a waitress recovering from a heart transplant. (1 hr. 56 mins.; PG) *Opens 4/7.*

The Road to El Dorado—See Rainer, page 85. (1 hr. 27 mins.; PG) *CC Village East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's Chelsea; Loews Orpheum 7; UA Gemini; Clearview's Olympia; New Coliseum; Nova; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; Plaza; UA*

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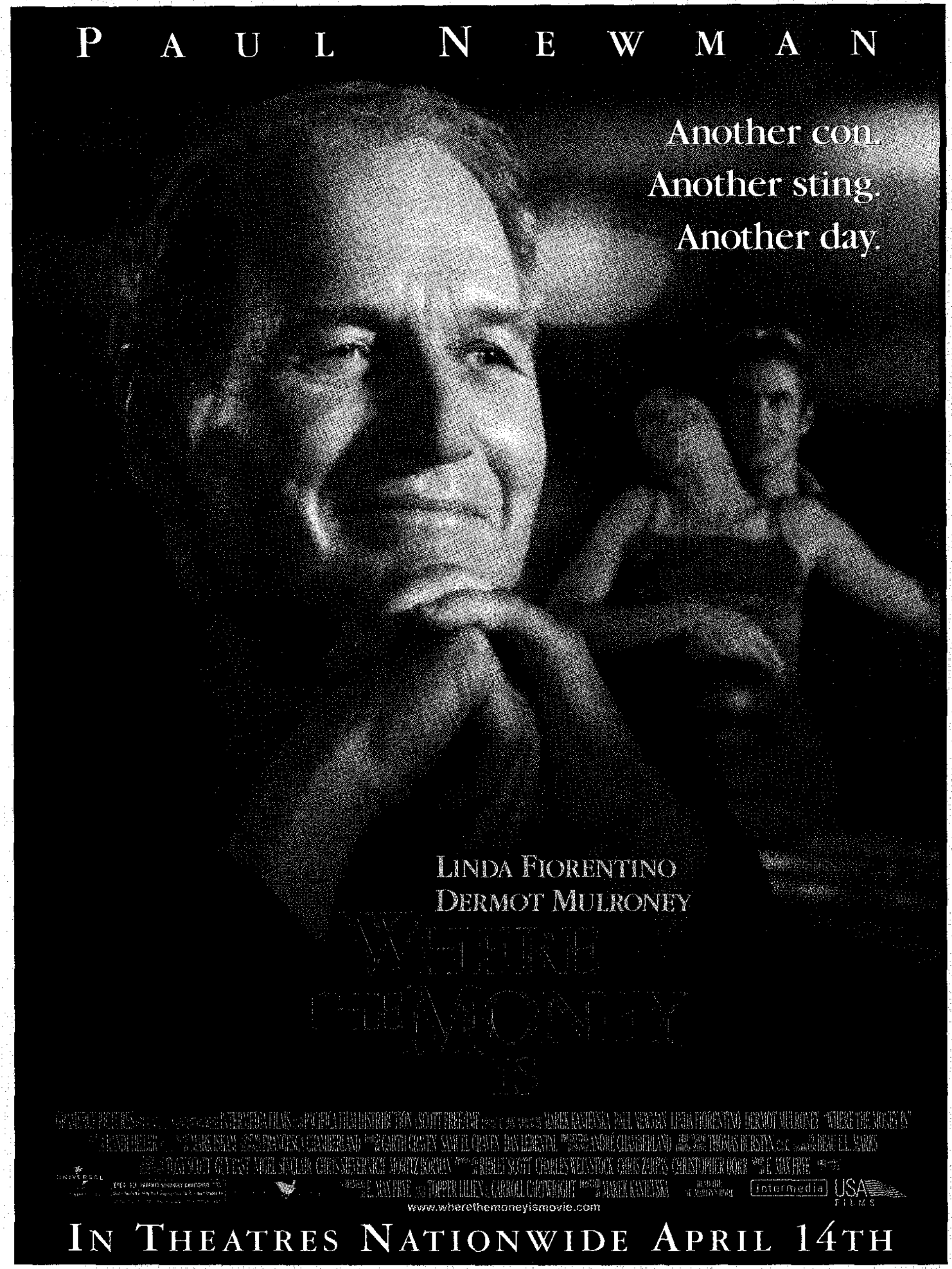
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Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island; Brooklyn Heights.

Romeo Must Die—Hong Kong film veteran Jet Li is an ex-cop looking to avenge his little brother's murder in gang-torn Oakland. Li hooks up with pop-star Aaliyah in her film debut as the rival gang leader's daughter in this hi-fi action flick based loosely on Romeo and Juliet. (1 hr. 56 mins.; R) *Loews Village; Loews 19th St. East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Loews 72nd St. East; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; New Coliseum; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Canarsie; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; UA Marboro; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Centre Sunnyside; Jackson Triplex; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay; UA Movieworld; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Rules of Engagement—In yet another movie about military discipline, a colonel-turned-lawyer played by Tommy Lee Jones must defend his friend (Samuel L. Jackson), who saved his life in Vietnam but is now accused of killing civilian demonstrators. (2 hrs. 3 mins.; R) *Opens 4/7.*

Shadow Boxers—This documentary on women boxers focuses on Lucia Rijker, a Dutch-Indonesian athlete who defies most stereotypes about the sport. (1 hr. 12 mins.; NR) *Opens 4/7.*

The Sixth Sense—Bruce Willis, Toni Collette, a little boy with a dark ability, and a nice twist. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; UA Criterion.*

The Skulls—*Dawson's Creek* star Joshua Jackson plays a New Haven townie who gets accepted to Yale—which is good—and then joins a secret, elitist fraternity—which is bad. Very bad. (PG-13) *UA Union Square; Clearview's Chelsea West; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews 42nd Street E Walk; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Loews 84th Street; Bay Plaza; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Kent Triplex; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Pavilion; Ridgewood; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Kaufman Astoria Cinema; Main Street Cinemas; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Hylan Plaza; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

Snow Day—When a blizzard hits upstate New York, the students snowplow their school shut and wreak havoc. With Chris Elliott, Chevy Chase, and Mark Webber. (1 hr. 29 mins.; PG) *CO Worldwide Cinemas; Concourse Plaza; Whitestone; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Main Street Cinemas.*

★**The Straight Story**—David Lynch's affecting, meditative movie about a stubborn codger (Richard Farnsworth) who rides his lawn mower clear across Iowa to visit an ailing, estranged brother is perhaps the greatest Hallmark Hall of Fame movie that Hallmark never made. It's sweet, but a bit thin: Lynch isn't really a resident of this calendar-art world of home truths and homilies. (Rainer; 10/25/99) (1 hr. 51 mins.; G) *CC Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Stuart Little—A sweet, funny, dumbed-down version of E. B. White's children's story. (1 hr. 23 mins.; G) *Kew Gardens Cinemas; Main Street Cinemas.*

Such a Long Journey—Based on Rohinton Mistry's Booker Prize–nominated novel. On the eve of India's war with Pakistan in 1971, an unhappy Bombay bank clerk takes part in a mysterious political mission. (1 hr. 50 mins.; NR) *Loews State.*

This Is Not An Exit—The documentary we've all been waiting for. Subtitled "The Fictional World of Brett Easton Ellis," this film mixes home video footage with dramatizations of Ellis's novels. (1 hr. 20 mins.; NR) *Opens 4/7.*

3 Strikes—Brian Hooks (*Beloved, Bulworth*) stars in this comedy about a young convict trying to avoid his third conviction which, according to California penal codes, would result in a life sentence. With David Alan Grier. (1 hr. 24 mins.; R) *CO Worldwide Cinemas; Concourse Plaza; Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

The Tigger Movie—Winnie-the-Pooh's hyper-spastic pal Tigger bounces about in search of his ancestry. (1 hr. 16 mins.; G) *Linden Boulevard Multiplex; Main Street Cinemas.*

★**Titus**—Julie Taymor's stab at Shakespeare's most Marlovian play (which she's also directed Off Broadway) comes across as the granddaddy of all Hollywood ghoulfests—striking, original, and supremely off-putting. (Rainer; 12/20/99) (2 hrs. 21 mins.; R) *UA Union Square.*

★**Topsy-Turvy**—Mike Leigh's movie about Gilbert and Sullivan and what led to *The Mikado* is a rich tribute to the theater and theater people. Leigh moves right into the late-Victorian era without a hitch. (Rainer; 12/20/99) (2 hrs. 41 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; Clearview's First & 62nd St; Brooklyn Heights.*

Waking the Dead—Billy Crudup is Fielding Pierce, a rising-star attorney headed for Congress who suddenly has crippling flashbacks of his wife Sarah, who was murdered eight years ago. Might Sarah still be alive? (1 hr. 43 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Whatever It Takes—Shane West and James Franco are high-school buddies who scheme to snag their respective dreamgirls before graduation. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG-13) *CC Village East; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; UA Criterion; Clearview's First & 62nd St.; Loews Orpheum 7; Sony Lincoln Square; Bay Plaza; Whitestone; UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay; Main Street Cinemas; UA Astoria; UA Crossbay II; UA Movies at Bayside; UA Movieworld; UA Movies at Staten Island.*

The Whole Nine Yards—Matthew Perry is an amiable dentist; Rosanna Arquette is the wife who wants him dead; and Bruce Willis is Jimmy "the Tulip," the ex–hit man who lives next door in dubious witness protection. You do the math. (1 hr. 39 mins.; R) *UA Union Square; Loews Kips Bay Theatre; Loews Coronet; Loews State; Kaufman Astoria Cinema.*

★**Wonder Boys**—A marvelous comedy starring Michael Douglas as a college creative-writing professor in Pittsburgh whose wife has walked out on him, and the long weekend in which his life

Previews
International Man of History

Régis Wargnier is unapologetic. Critics have called his movies—the Oscar-winning *Indochine* and the Oscar-nominated *East-West*—sappy period epics, and he's not arguing. "I'm okay with melodrama," he says. "I like that. I discovered cinema through the Hollywood films of the fifties. CinemaScope, Technicolor epics, Westerns, big stuff. You know, in French we don't have a word for *epic*. We say *grand spectacle*, which isn't the same. But I like the word." Bigger, as far as he's concerned, is always better. "Claude Chabrol once told me, 'Régis, you and some other French fellows, why can't you stop trying each time to make the best movie ever? You should not put so much of your energy into one movie every three years.' But I don't even choose. It's the way I am." Wargnier's father, a military man, spent twelve years abroad fighting France's wars, and when Wargnier wasn't at the movies "to escape a very heavy atmosphere at home" (his absent father and philandering mother were depicted in his 1994 film *A French Woman*), he was trying to keep track of his dad's whereabouts. "When you are a kid and your father is on duty, even sometimes in danger, you want to know where, so you look at maps," Wargnier says. "You listen to the radio. What happened yesterday in Indochina and what does it mean, from a political point of view, to fight these people? Who are they? Why are they our enemies?" The idea for *East-West* developed through firsthand research. Wargnier was scouting locations for a now-defunct project on the Asian steppe when he came across the children of Russians exiled during the revolution who'd returned to Stalin's empire after World War II. Foolishly expecting a warm welcome, most of them were stunned to be sent to labor camps for "spying." Everything about the filming made the laboriously constructed *Indochine* look easy by comparison. After interviewing several survivors and collaborating with three screenwriters (including two Russians), Wargnier shot the film in Bulgaria and the Ukraine, casting Oleg Menchikov—who spoke no French—in the lead role of a doctor who speaks a great deal of it. "I would say that sometimes we had the same feelings as the characters we were filming—loneliness, isolation," says Wargnier. "And I guess it helped. *East-West* is maybe less exotic than *Indochine*, but I think it gets closer to the characters. *Indochine* was very powerful to look at, but people felt much less concerned." They shouldn't expect anything radically different, though. There's still high political drama, love triangles, and, of course, Catherine Deneuve (above left, with Sandrine Bonnaire and Erwan Baynaud). *East-West* opens April 7 at the Paris.

Boris Kachka

Photograph by Etienne George.

unravels and ties itself up again. Curtis Hanson directed, lyrically and lucidly, from Steve Kloves's adaptation of Michael Chabon's 1995 novel. (Rainer; 3/6/00) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Loews Coronet; Sony Lincoln Square.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Art Greenwich Twin—97–101 Greenwich Ave., at W. 12th St. (212-929-3350) *Boiler Room; Topsy-Turvy.*

CC Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (212-995-2000) *All About My Mother; The Cider House Rules; Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai; Mifune; The Straight Story; Winter Sleepers.*

CC Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (212-529-6799) *Here on Earth; High Fidelity; Price of Glory; The Sixth Sense; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Cinema Village—22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363) *Judy Berlin; Kadosh; Not One Less.*

Clearview's Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (777-FILM#603) *Being John Malkovich; Final Destination.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110) *Long Night's Journey Into Day; The Filth and the Fury.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Loews Village—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (50-LOEWS#952) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; The Ninth Gate; Romeo Must Die.*

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (212-255-8800) *Beau Travail; Boys Don't Cry; Sweet and Lowdown; The Color of Paradise.*

The Screening Room—54 Varick St. (212-334-2100) *Beautiful People; Holy Smoke.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

UA Union Square—13th St. and Broadway (212-253-2225) *Beyond the Mat; Cotton Mary; Final Destination; Girl, Interrupted; The Insider; Magnolia; Mission to Mars; My Dog Skip; Pitch Black; The Skulls; Titus; Waking the Dead; The Whole Nine Yards.*

14th–41st Streets

CC Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (212-689-6548) *Boys Don't Cry; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; Price of Glory.*

Clearview's Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#597) *Black and White; The Cider House Rules; Final Destination; Here on Earth; Magnolia; Mission to Mars; The Ninth Gate; Price of Glory; The Road to El Dorado.*

Clearview's Chelsea West—333 W. 23rd St. (777-FILM#614) *The Skulls.*

Loews 19th St. East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (50-LOEWS#858) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; High Fidelity; Romeo Must Die.*

Loews Kips Bay Theatre—570 Second Ave. (505-6397#558) *American Beauty; Boiler Room; The Cider House Rules; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Mission to Mars; The Ninth Gate; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes; The Whole Nine Yards.*

42nd–60th Streets

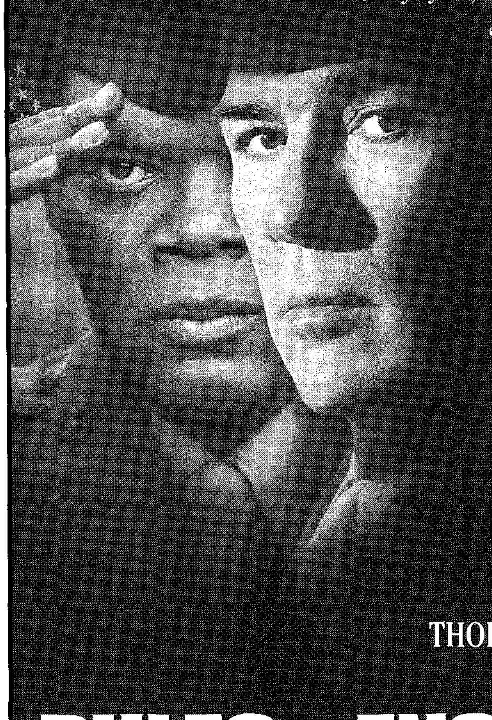
CC Cinemas 1, 2, 3—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (212-753-6022) *Boiler Room; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars.*

CC Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (212-759-2262) *The Cider House Rules.*

CC Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (212-755-3020) *All About My Mother.*

CC Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (212-759-1411) *Final Destination; Magnolia.*

Clearview's 59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (777-



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FILM#615) *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai.*

Clearview's Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (777-FILM#602) *American Beauty.*

CO Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *Drowning Mona; Galaxy Quest; The Green Mile; The Next Best Thing; Snow Day; The Talented Mr. Ripley; 3 Strikes.*

Loews 42nd Street E Walk—42nd Street at Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#572) *Erin Brockovich; Mission to Mars; The Ninth Gate; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado.*

Loews Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway and Eighth Ave. (50-LOEWS#699) *Final Destination.*

Loews Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *The Whole Nine Yards; Wonder Boys.*

Loews State—1540 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (50-LOEWS#901) *American Beauty; Boiler Room; Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai; Such a Long Journey; The Whole Nine Yards.*

Paris Theatre—4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800) *Cotton Mary.*

UA Criterion—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (212-354-0900) *Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; The Hurricane; The Sixth Sense; Whatever It Takes.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

CC 86th St. East—210 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#763) *Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; Final Destination; Mission to Mars.*

Clearview's Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (777-FILM#606) *American Beauty.*

Clearview's First & 62nd St.—400 E. 62nd St. (777-FILM#957) *Boys Don't Cry; Price of Glory; The Skulls; Topsy-Turvy; Waking the Dead; Whatever It Takes.*

Clearview's Park and 86th St.—125 E. 86th St. (777-FILM#604) *Erin Brockovich; Here on Earth.*

Loews 72nd St. East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (50-LOEWS#704) *Romeo Must Die.*

Loews New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (50-LOEWS#698) *Erin Brockovich.*

Loews Orpheum 7—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (50-LOEWS#964) *High Fidelity; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (212-249-5100) *American Beauty.*

UA Gemini—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (212-832-1670) *The End of the Affair; Here on Earth; The Road to El Dorado.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

Clearview's 62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (777-FILM#864) *Here on Earth.*

Clearview's Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (777-FILM#609) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich.*

Clearview's Olympia—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (777-FILM#613) *Mission to Mars; The Road to El Dorado.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (212-757-2280) *All About My Mother; Beau Travail; Mifune; Not One Less; The Straight Story; The Color of Paradise; Winter Sleepers.*

Loews 84th Street—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (50-LOEWS#701) *American Beauty; Final Destination; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (212-740-1545) *Final Destination; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts.

Previews

A Film of Her Own

In 'Muriel's Wedding,' Australian actress Rachel Griffiths was the liberated best friend who helped Muriel overcome her obsession with getting married. Now, after her performance in the critically adored 'Hilary and Jackie,' Griffiths gets the big lead. In 'Me Myself I,' Australia's answer to 'Sliding Doors,' she plays a single journalist who overcomes her own obsession with marriage after falling into another dimension and finding herself wedded to the love of her life, with three obnoxious children and virtually no career. Like Gwyneth's role in 'Sliding Doors,' this one isn't exactly subtle, but Griffiths (above right, with Rebecca Frith) is better at playing for laughs, even when contemplating suicide. Opens April 7.

Photograph courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics.

Kalb *continued from page 63*

ties, along with some level of commercial activity," says Councilman Ken Fisher. "It would be a destination, with ice skating, a hotel—comparable to San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, Ghirardelli Square, and Fisherman's Wharf."

7. If the old Coliseum—the first of the Upper West Side urban-renewal projects—was considered a late-vintage monument to Robert Moses, the $1.6 billion Columbus Centre, future home of Time Warner/AOL, has to be considered an early monument to the new economy. The two 750-foot towers being developed by the Related Companies and Apollo Real Estate Advisors (with others) will include a concert hall for jazz that will be considered part of Lincoln Center, a top-tier Mandarin Oriental hotel, stores, restaurants, and 225 luxury condominiums. "It will connect the theater district with Lincoln Center," says Alexander Garvin. "With Columbus Circle coming back, all that marginal stuff on Broadway will disappear," adds Robert Stern. "Broadway will become a promenade. Right now, Starbucks is the gastronomic highlight, but this will bring vitality down from Broadway's upper reaches." It helps that neighboring 2 Columbus Circle—the sixties' neo-palazzo that was the Huntington Hartford Gallery of Art—is on the block. Sure, it's possible the winner won't tear down the lollipop-legged dinosaur, but that seems highly unlikely. And once the new buildings become a reality, residential prices in the long-depressed area will only shoot up further, says Halstead Property senior vice-president Deanna Kory.

8. "Every single time I drove by the Washburn Wire factory on the FDR with Moynihan," Alex Washburn (no relation) remembers, "he would point it out and say, 'This would not be allowed to happen in Japan. But we've become blind to it.' You could set your watch by that comment." Not anymore. East Harlem is getting the largest commercial development in its history. The $160 million East River Plaza, the future home of a big-box Home Depot, a Best Buy, and a Costco, will be built on the site of the long-abandoned Washburn Wire Factory—the plump white elephant squatting between East 116th and 119th Streets alongside the FDR Drive. The current developers bought the factory site at a foreclosure auction held by the federal government. "Washburn Wire is key, because it's one of the most dilapidated sites the city has harbored for almost 50 years," says Washburn. "What is happening now proves there *is* commercial potential. When you look back ten years from now, it will look like a no-brainer." ■

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by Peter Rainer...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the theaters where the film is playing.

(212-862-5728) *Black and White; Price of Glory; The Road to El Dorado.*

Sony Lincoln Square—1998 Broadway, at 68th St. (50-LOEWS#638) *Boiler Room; Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; Erin Brockovich; Fantasia/2000; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars; The Road to El Dorado; Waking the Dead; Whatever It Takes; Wonder Boys.*

Bronx

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (777-FILM#833) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (718-588-8800) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; My Dog Skip; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; Snow Day; The Road to El Dorado; 3 Strikes.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (718-409-9030) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Mission to Mars; My Dog Skip; The Ninth Gate; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; Snow Day; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Brooklyn

BAM Rose Cinemas—30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770) *Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (718-596-7070) *All About My Mother; Final Destination; The Road to El Dorado; Topsy-Turvy; American Movie.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (718-251-0700) *Black and White; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado.*

Clearview's Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (718-596-9113) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; High Fidelity; The Hurricane; Mission to Mars; Price of Glory; Return to Me.*

CO Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Kingsway—946 Kings Hwy., at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (718-338-3371) *Black and White; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado.*

Linden Boulevard Multiplex—Linden Blvd. and Eldert Lane (718-277-0303) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Mission to Mars; My Dog Skip; The Ninth Gate; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; Snow Day; The Road to El Dorado; 3 Strikes; The Tigger Movie.*

Pavilion—188 Prospect Park West (718-369-0838) *Erin Brockovich; Mission to Mars; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado.*

Ridgewood—55-27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (718-821-5993) *Black and White; Final Destination; Price of Glory; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado.*

UA Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (718-232-4000) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; Mission to Mars; Romeo Must Die.*

UA Movies at Sheepshead Bay—3907 Shore Pkwy., off Exit 9 at Belt Pkwy. (718-615-1700) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

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Queens

Centre Sunnyside—42-17 Queens Blvd. (718-361-6869) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; My Dog Skip; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado.*

Cinemart—106-03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (718-261-2244) *The Cider House Rules; Final Destination; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars.*

CO Cinema City—183-15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *Call theater for showtimes.*

CO Fresh Meadows—Eastbound Service Rd. at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Call theater for showtimes.*

College Point Multiplex—28-55 Ulmer St., Whitestone (718-886-4900) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars; My Dog Skip; The Ninth Gate; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (718-478-6777) *Final Destination; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado.*

Kaufman Astoria Cinema—38th St. at 35th Ave. (718-786-2020) *All About My Mother; Boys Don't Cry; The Cider House Rules; Drowning Mona; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; My Dog Skip; Price of Glory; The Skulls; 3 Strikes; The Whole Nine Yards.*

Kew Gardens Cinemas—81-05 Lefferts Blvd. (718-441-9835) *All About My Mother; Boys Don't Cry; Kadosh; Mifune; The Ninth Gate; Not One Less; Price of Glory; Stuart Little.*

Main Street Cinemas—72-66 Main St. (718-263-4828) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; My Dog Skip; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; Snow Day; Stuart Little; The Road to El Dorado; The Tigger Movie; Whatever It Takes.*

North Shore Towers—27-10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (718-229-7702) *The Cider House Rules.*

Plaza—103-14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (718-639-0012) *Price of Glory; The Road to El Dorado.*

Sony Bay Terrace—211-01 26th Ave., at Bell Blvd., Bayside (777-FILM#712) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Elmwood—57-02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (777-FILM#733) *Call theater for showtimes.*

Sony Trylon—98-81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Rego Park (777-FILM#735) *Call theater for showtimes.*

UA Astoria—28-60 Steinway St. (718-726-1279) *American Beauty; Mission to Mars; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

UA Brandon Cinema—70-20 Austin St., Forest Hills (718-544-1020) *Romeo Must Die.*

UA Crossbay—94-11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (718-848-1738) *Final Destination; Romeo Must Die.*

UA Crossbay II—92-10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (718-641-5330) *Erin Brockovich; Here on Earth; Mission to Mars; Price of Glory; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

UA Midway—108-22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (718-544-5545) *American Beauty; Drowning Mona; Erin Brockovich; Here on Earth; My Dog Skip; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; The Whole Nine Yards.*

UA Movies at Bayside—38-39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (718-225-7711) *Erin Brockovich; Here on Earth; The Skulls; Whatever It Takes.*

UA Movieworld—242-02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (718-423-7200) *Boys Don't Cry; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; Romeo Must Die; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Staten Island

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Rd., nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (718-317-8300) *American Beauty; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; My Dog Skip; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

UA Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (718-351-0805) *Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado.*

UA Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (718-983-9600) *American Beauty; Boys Don't Cry; Erin Brockovich; Final Destination; Here on Earth; High Fidelity; Mission to Mars; My Dog Skip; Price of Glory; Romeo Must Die; The Skulls; The Road to El Dorado; Whatever It Takes.*

Screenings
Take the Credits

What would 'Dr. Strangelove' be without those two warplanes coupling so suggestively during its opening credits? Whether you see a cuddly newborn floating weightlessly, as in 'The World According to Garp,' or a blown-up Robert De Niro falling through flames, as in 'Casino,' a well-designed title sequence sets the tone and pace of a movie before anyone even opens his mouth. "For Openers: The Art of Film Titles," the Film Society of Lincoln Center's two-day tribute, celebrates title design for its own sake. The first day includes screenings of short films by title designers like Saul Bass and Charles and Ray Eames, followed by a panel discussion and, later, openers from 1950 to 1980. The next day, the designers themselves will present and discuss contemporary sequences from movies like 'Magnolia,' 'Seven,' and 'The Talented Mr. Ripley.' April 7 and 8 at the Walter Reade Theater.

Barbarella

Photograph courtesy of the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of the Moving Image—Through 4/30: "Vision and Modernity: The Films of Fritz Lang." 4/8: *M* (1931), with lecture by guest curator Tom Gunning; *You and Me* (1938); 4/9: *Destiny* (1921); *The Last Will of Dr. Maduse* (1933). 4/7: Preview screening of *Time Code*, with appearance by director Mike Figgis. 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens (718-784-0077). Tickets, $4.50–$8.50. Members and children under 4, free.

Anthology Film Archives—4/4, 4/5, 4/7, 4/8: *Papa's Song*. 4/7–4/9: *Divine Trash*. 4/4: "Short Films From Australia." 4/5: "New Filmmakers": Shorts: *Lemon; Talkie & Silence; Humidity*; Feature: *The Stranger*. 4/6: *Beyond Good and Evil*. 4/7: "Fritz Lang Restored": *Die Nibelungen* (Parts I and II). 4/8: "Fritz Lang Restored": *Spies; The Spiders*. 4/9: *L'Age d'Or; Los Olvidados*. 4/10: "Fritz Lang Restored": Panel discussion on Lang. See also American Museum of the Moving Image. 4/10: "PS2000 Short Film Festival" continues. 32 Second Ave. (212-505-5110); $8.

BAM Rose Cinemas—4/4: *Force of Evil* (1948). 4/5: *Fury* (1936). 4/6: *Thieves* (1996). 4/7: *Diner* (1982). "Herzog-Kinski: Clash of the Titans" continues. 4/8–4/9: *Fitzcarraldo* (1982). 4/10: *The Edge* (1967), with *The Ghosts of Electricity* (1997). 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-623-2770).

Cinema Classics—"Noir: Visions of Dark." 4/4: *Johnny Eager* (1947); 4/5–4/6: *Force of Evil* (1948); 4/7–4/9: *Gilda* (1946); 4/10: *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1947). 332 E. 11th St. (212-675-6692); $5.

Film Forum—Through 4/6: "Neo Noir." 4/4–4/5: *Get Carter* (1970); *Stormy Monday* (1988); 4/6: *Touch of Evil* (1958); *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959); 4/7–4/13: *Breathless* (1959). 209 W. Houston St. (212-727-8110); $9.

Guggenheim Museum—Through 5/3: "Generation Ñ: New Latino Films and Videos." 4/7–4/8: Shorts: *My Father's Lunch; PapaPapá; A La Medida*. 4/8: *Nuyorican Dream*. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St. (212-423-3587 or boxoffice@guggenheim.org; 212-360-4312 for more information); $10 ($7 members, seniors, and students).

Museum of Modern Art—"New Directors/New Films" continues through 4/9. 4/4: *Martin; One Day Crossing; Crane World; Parelisa*. 4/5–4/6: *Human Resources; Our Song; I Got You Babe*. 4/7: *Jesus' Son; Ratcatcher; Dream*. 4/8: *Jesus' Son; Sound and Fury; Herod's Law; Close Encounters*. 4/9: *Ratcatcher; Dream; Sound and Fury; Herod's Law; Close Encounters*. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); free with $10 admission, $6.50 for students and seniors, no admission fee for children 16 and under when accompanied by an adult.

Ocularis—4/9: *Heart of Glass* (1976). 4/10: *A* (1996). At Galapagos, 70 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn. (718-388-8713); $5.

The Screening Room—Through 4/6: "Gambler: The Films of James Toback." 4/4: *The Pick-Up Artist* (1987); 4/5: *Bugsy* (1991). 4/6: *Two Girls and a Guy* (1998). 54 Varick St. (212-334-2100); $9 ($6 for Sunday brunch patrons).

YWCA Cine-Club—"4 Women + Film" continues with the films of Françoise Romand. 4/8–4/9: *Mix-Up* (1985); *Call Me Madam* (1986). In French with English subtitles. 610 Lexington Ave., at 53rd St. (212-735-9717); $6 members, $7 nonmembers.

theater

Patrick Stewart...Hayley Mills...*Naked*

Broadway

Previews and Openings

Copenhagen—A major hit in London, Michael Frayn's heady play about what might have happened when German physicist Werner Heisenberg visited Niels Bohr in 1941 stars Philip Bosco, Blair Brown, and Michael Cumpsty. $40–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/11 opening. *Royale Theatre, 242 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jesus Christ Superstar—Yeah, he's the Messiah, but what he really wants to do is sing in Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical. $26–$81. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/16 opening. *Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4100).*

A Moon for the Misbegotten—Thanks to Eugene O'Neill's artistry, the character of Josie is a riveting character when incarnated by the right actress, and Cherry Jones is a transcendent actress; when Cherry is in bloom, she is, like her namesake trees, worth a pilgrimage from the four corners of the earth. As James, Gabriel Byrne gives a complementarily moving performance as a lost soul in a dying body, whom we watch superbly enact the painful rites of a redemption as his flesh visibly wastes away. (Simon: 4/3/00.) $60–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Walter Kerr Theatre, 219 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Music Man—Choreographer Susan Stroman (*Contact*) opens her second Broadway show of the season, a revival of Meredith Wilson's giddy musical about a con artist who connives his way into the hearts of innocent Iowans. Starring Craig Bierko and Rebecca Luker. $20–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/5 for a 4/27 opening. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd. St. (212-307-4100).*

The Real Thing—Tom Stoppard's comic play about a writer's love life and artistic career, directed by David Levaux. $35–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/17 opening. *Barrymore Theatre, 243 W. 47th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Ride Down Mt. Morgan—Patrick Stewart stars in Arthur Miller's drama. $55–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for an April 9 opening. Through 7/23. *Ambassador Theatre, 215 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

Rose—In Martin Sherman's play, Olympia Dukakis plays a Jewish woman who sits on a Miami Beach park bench and reflects on her life, from her childhood in Russia, through Warsaw's ghettos, to Don Johnson's Miami. $30–$60. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/12 opening. *Lyceum Theatre, 149 W. 45 St. (212-239-6200).*

Taller Than a Dwarf—Parker Posey and Matthew Broderick star in a new comedy by Elaine May. $25–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/24 opening. *Longacre Theatre, 220 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Wild Party—Apparently, the partying on Broadway didn't end on New Year's Eve. Toni Collette, Eartha Kitt, and Mandy Patinkin throw a Jazz Age bash in a new musical, the second this season with the same title and source, by Michael John LaChiusa and George C. Wolfe. $40–$85. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/13 opening. *Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Now Playing

Aida—*See Simon, p. 105.* $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Palace Theatre, 1554 Broadway, at 47th St. (212-307-4747).*

Amadeus—Nearly two decades after its London and Broadway triumphs, Peter Shaffer's play returns, again directed by Sir Peter Hall. Michael Sheen purrs, hisses, and farts as Mozart; David Suchet, known best as Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot on *Mystery!*, plays his conniving nemesis, Salieri. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Annie Get Your Gun—Bernadette Peters plays the sharp-tongued, sharpshootin' gal from Cincinnati. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis Theatre, 1535 Broadway, bet. 45th and 46th Sts. (212-307-4100).*

Beauty and the Beast—Disney's beast is back. $25–$85. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. *Lunt-Fontanne Theatre, 205 W. 46th St. (212-307-4747).*

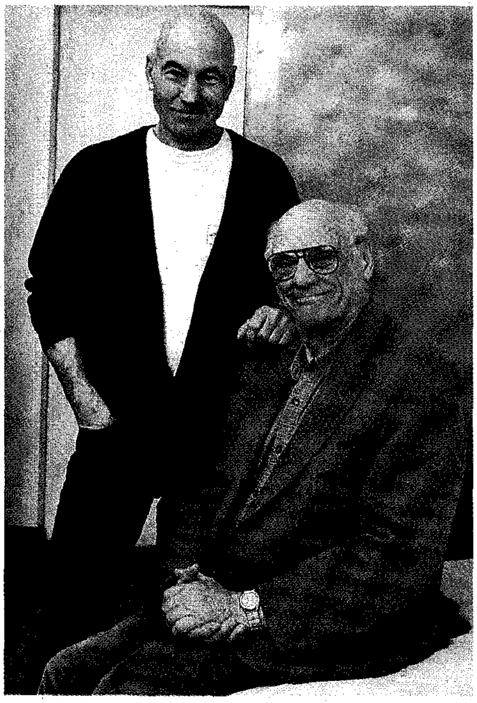
Cabaret—The Roundabout is to be roundly applauded for re-creating Sam Mendes's 1993 London production, even if with some diminishment. Aided by Rob Marshall as co-director and choreographer, Mendes confirms his directorial reputation with the nightclub scenes. Shortcomings notwithstanding, this revival has enough to satisfy all but the most fastidious. (Simon: 3/30/98.) Now starring Susan Egan and Michael Hall. $25–$90. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Studio 54, 254 W. 54th St. (212-239-6200).*

Opening

Mountain Men

Lyman Felt is a middle-aged bigamist and a glutton, a crude joker and a miserable liar—and perhaps the unlikeliest hero in Arthur Miller's gallery of epic Everymen. A mountainside car accident has left Felt in a hospital bed in critical condition, and both of his loving wives come to visit, only to meet each other for the first time. This is the preposterous premise of Arthur Miller's *The Ride Down Mt. Morgan*, a meditation on masculine desire of Clintonian proportions and Kennedy-like *vigah*. "It doesn't read like the play of a 75-year-old man," explains *Star Trek* and *Christmas Carol* sex symbol Patrick Stewart, who plays Felt, "and I think Arthur relishes this aspect of it." Stewart (pictured, with Miller) praises the "poetry in the prose he writes, the vigor of his images, the powerful elements of irony and agony," and the "healthy vulgarity" of a script that opens with a joke about "suckcess" and an "economic system" that is really just "one enormous tit." Felt's "desire to experience everything, to satisfy his hungers," immediately hooked Stewart. "I think it's enough to say that I connected with Lyman in his appetites," Stewart coyly remarks. Still, neither Stewart nor Miller will let Felt get off so easily in this new production: Miller has rewritten the final scene and added a new monologue so that Felt must finally address the pain of the people he has hurt. Stewart says the fireworks make this "a great date play. When I saw the success of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and the other quiz shows, I was delighted, because uncontrolled avarice is such a strong theme in this play. Arthur has said that the play is a comment on the eighties in the U.S., but I think it speaks to this moment as well." In previews for an April 9 opening. (See "Broadway.")

LOGAN HILL



Photograph by Joan Marcus.

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where discount tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-508-0740.

Cats—Eight lives and counting. $40–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/25. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (212-239-6200).*

Chicago—It was a gamble to transfer the Encores! production of this musical to Broadway, but since it's about women who kill their men and the mercenary lawyer who gets them off, gambling seems like the merest peccadillo. Every bosom, pelvis, and long leg is in business to keep the women in the audience identifying, the men panting. (Simon: 11/30/98.) Now starring Bebe Neuwirth. $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Contact—*See Simon, p. 105.* (Simon: 10/25/99.) $55–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dame Edna: The Royal Tour—Other performers have invented running stage personas for themselves like Australia's Barry Humphries and his Dame Edna Everage, but have they been this amusing? I am prepared to declare him the funniest man in today's theater. Also the funniest woman. (Simon: 11/2/99.) $45–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Footloose—Kevin Bacon is not a part of this maxi-musical adaptation, but the lead does have his haircut. $20–$75. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (212-307-4100).*

Fosse—A tribute to the late choreographer-director, whose swivelin'-hips-and-bowler-hat aesthetic came roaring back with the revival of *Chicago.* Featuring ballet star Julio Bocca, through 4/8. $65–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Broadhurst Theatre, 235 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Green Bird—With the stylish puppetry, masks, and visual risks she is known for, Julie Taymor (*The Lion King*) opens her new comedy, a mixed-up tale about a king and mixed-up twins. $45–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/18 opening. *Cort Theatre, 138 W. 48th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jackie Mason—Much Ado About Everything—Jackie Mason is not so funny as Dame Edna (who is?) but still damned funny. He is politically incorrect, and glories in it with ecstatic gloat. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $65–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

James Joyce's The Dead—Transferred from Playwrights Horizons, a musical adaptation of the short story by James Joyce, featuring a magnificent and diverse cast (which includes Stephen Spinella, and Marni Nixon) and the plaintive Irish melodies of Shaun Davey. Richard Nelson did the book and directs. Stephen Bogardus replaces Christopher Walken, 4/4–4/23. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Belasco Theatre, 111 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Jekyll & Hyde—Man turns into beastly man, all in the name of science. $45–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Plymouth Theatre, 236 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Kiss Me, Kate—Brian Stokes Mitchell and Marin Mazzie interpret Cole Porter's feuding couple—two actors who play the Shrew's Kate and Petruchio in a play-within-the-musical. $25–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

Les Misérables—The implacable Inspector Javert hounding the innocent ex-convict Jean Valjean; the pathetic Fantine, wronged by the entire world, dying as she entrusts her daughter, Cosette, to the now-prosperous Mayor Valjean; the dastardly Thénardiers bringing up Cosette as a scullion while cosseting their own daughter, Eponine—what a story! Just synopsizing the plot brings tears to the iciest of eyes. (Simon: 3/31/97.) $20–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Lion King—This spectacle rightfully earns that most abused of epithets: *magical.* Kiddies will delightedly swallow it whole, unless they are tiny and flappable. But this is the one such show adults will feast on, too, mostly because of the wonders wrought by Julie Taymor, who designed and directed this cornucopia of dazzlements. Puppetry from East and West is put to superlative use, yet the performers are accorded enough humanity to ply their anthropomorphic skills. (Simon: 12/1/97.) $20–$90. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 11/13/97. *New Amsterdam Theater, 214 W. 42nd St. (212-307-4747).*

Miss Saigon—A big helicopter stars in this adaptation of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly.* $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (212-239-6200).*

The Phantom of the Opera—Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in. $20–$80. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Rent—The late Jonathan Larson's reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary sick and hip types living in the East Village. $35–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (212-307-4100).*

Riverdance—This revamped version returns to New York, featuring flamenco and South African vocals, along with Irish singer Brian Kennedy and dancers Pat Roddy and Eileen Martin. $25–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Gershwin Theatre, 222 W. 51st St. (212-307-4100).*

Saturday Night Fever—Flared pants! $30–$80. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (212-307-4100).*

Swing!—The dance marathon begins, with requisite suspenders and flared skirts, in this new musical. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3 and 7. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

True West—Sam Shepard's dysfunctional brothers are brought back to life by two old friends: Philip Seymour Hoffman and John C. Reilly, most recently spotted together in the film *Magnolia.* Matthew Warchus (*Art*) directs. $65–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Circle-in-the-Square Theatre, W. 50th St., West of Broadway (212-239-6200).*

Waiting in the Wings—Noël Coward's fiftieth play (1960) still remains a minor gem in that bittersweet mode at which Coward excelled. A piece about former star stage actresses living out their declining years in the Wings, a less-than-lavish retirement home, the play is a wise and compassionate address of the problems of aging and death that confront us all. To miss this play (starring Rosemary Harris and Lauren Bacall) would be a major folly; not having a good time at it is a virtual—no, a real—impossibility. (Simon: 1/10/99.) $25–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (212-239-6200).*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

Blood on the Dining Room Floor—Jeremy Dobrish directs a new musical-theater work based on Gertrude Stein's "A Murder Mystery" in the WPA Theatre's new space. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/6 for a 4/16 opening. Through 5/7. *Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).*

Cobb—Lee Blessing's play about the life of controversial baseball legend Ty Cobb. $25–$35. Mon.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8. Previews begin 4/10 for a 4/17 opening. *Melting Pot Theatre, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-279-4200).*

Family Week—Beth Henley, who won a Pulitzer for *Crimes of the Heart,* presents a new comedy about a woman who's lost a child and is about to lose a husband. $39.50–$55. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and

Photograph by Patrick Litchfield.

Opening
The Broadway Trap

Boomers still adore Hayley Mills for her childhood roles in 'Pollyanna,' 'That Darn Cat!' and 'The Parent Trap,' but the actress also has theater in her blood. In recent years, Sir John's daughter has toured as Anna in 'The King and I' and tackled adult fare like 'The Three Sisters' and 'Talley's Folly' in London's West End. Now she's set for her New York stage debut in Noël Coward's 'Suite in Two Keys,' which includes the one-acts 'A Song at Twilight' and the first American performance of 'Shadows of the Evening.' In previews for an April 10 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

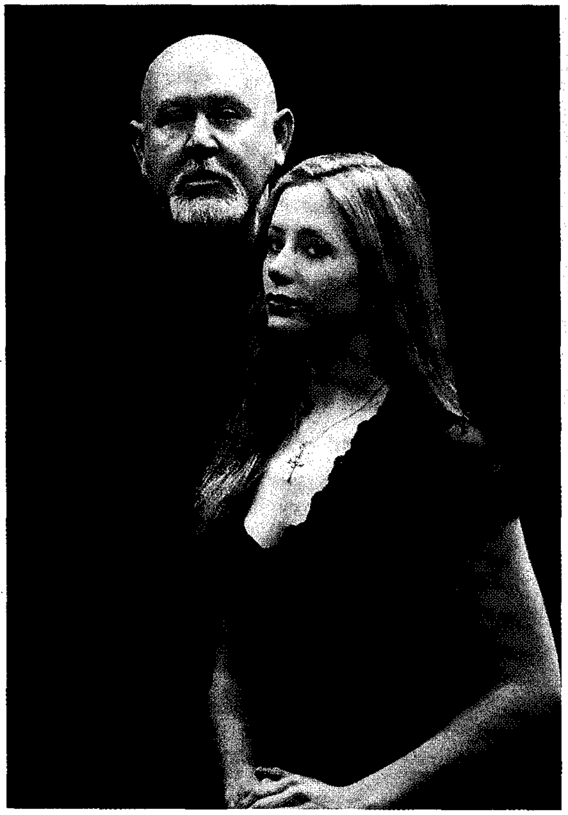
8, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 4/10 opening. *Century Center for the Performing Arts, 111 E. 15 St. (212-239-6200).*

James Baldwin: A Soul On Fire—New Federal Theatre presents a new play by Howard Simon about the controversial writer in 1963. $25. Thurs. and Fri. at 7:30, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3. Previews begin 4/6 for a 4/9 opening. *Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. (212-353-1176).*

Naked—Luigi Pirandello's intriguing tale. $25–45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, most Sat. and Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/9 opening. *Classic Stage Company, 136 E. 13th St. (212-677-4210).*

Noël Coward's Suite in Two Keys—Coward's two one-acts. $35–$50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. In previews for a 4/10 opening. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (212-239-6200).*

Uncle Vanya —The Roundabout presents Chekhov's comedy, starring vets Sir Derek Jacobi, Laura Linney, Brian Murray, and Roger Rees. Michael Mayer (*Side Man*) directs. $50–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. Previews begin 4/4 for a 4/30 opening. Through 6/11. *Brooks Atkinson Theatre, 256 W. 47th St. (212-307-4100).*



Opening
Look in the Mira

In Classic Stage's new production of Luigi Pirandello's suspenseful drama *Naked*, Brooklyn-born screen siren Mira Sorvino makes her New York stage debut as a young woman besieged by the Fifth Estate after a child dies while under her care. Daniel Benzali (pictured left, with Sorvino) plays a famous novelist who extracts the story of her life. In previews for an April 9 opening. (See "Off Broadway.")

Photograph by Dixie Sheridan.

Now Playing

American Buffalo—William H. Macy and Philip Baker Hall, two prodigiously talented actors who started out in the theater and achieved major Hollywood success, play bumbling thieves in David Mamet's 1975 play. $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 7. Through 5/21. *Atlantic Theater, 336 W. 20th St. (212-239-6200).*

Bad Boy Nietzsche—Off-Off Broadway's patron devil, Richard Foreman, pays tribute to philosophy's favorite Antichrist, Friedrich Nietzsche. $15. Tues., Thurs.–Sun. at 8. Through 4/30. *Ontological Theatre at St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-533-4650).*

Betwixt—Solo artist David Cale opens his first duet show, a musical tale of expatriate love performed with Cara Seymour. $20–$35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Theatre @ St. Clements, 423 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).*

The Big Bang—In the beginning, there was the word. Then there was the musical. In this backstage comedy, actors Jed Feuer and Boyd Graham present a backer's audition for a musical about the history of humanity. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 8, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Douglas Fairbanks Theatre, 432 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. $45–$55. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 7 and 10, Sat. at 4, 7, and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (212-254-4370).*

The Bomb-itty of Errors—A funky-fresh "add-raptation" of the Bard's classic. $20–$35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *45 Bleecker St. (212-307-4100).*

De La Guarda—A show that's part carnival, part rock concert, and almost entirely airborne. Perfect for theatrical thrill-seekers who don't mind breaking a sweat. $37.50–$45. Tues.–Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. *Daryl Roth Theatre, 20 Union Square East, at 15th St. (212-239-6200).*

Dinner With Friends—Karen and Gabe, international food writers, are giving a dinner for their friends Beth and Tom, which Tom doesn't attend. It emerges from the heartbroken Beth that her husband has left her for another woman. There is skillful construction here, as well as keen psychological insight. (Simon: 11/22/99.) $30–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7:30. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (212-239-6200).*

The Director—In Nancy Hasty's new play, a once-famous director has fallen from grace and is working as a janitor, until a young playwright enlists his skills—theatrical, that is, not custodial. Starring John Shea, last seen opposite Molly Ringwald in *How I Learned to Drive*. $25–$35. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3. *Arclight Theatre, 152 W. 71st St. (212-279-4200).*

The Donkey Show—A loose disco-musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with even looser morals. $35. Thurs.–Sat. at 8 and 10:30, Sun. at 8. *El Flamingo, 547 W. 21st St. (212-307-4100).*

Enough About Me: An Unauthorized Autobiography—Downtown diva Varla Jean Merman, who may or may not be the love child of Ernest Borgnine and Ethel Merman, reveals all the aorta-bursting heartache that festers behind her persona. $25. Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 11, Sun. at 7. *Chelsea Playhouse, 125 W. 22nd St. (212-307-4100).*

Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $36.50–$39. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Sullivan St. Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).*

Forbidden Broadway Cleans Up Its Act—Gerard Alessandrini's newest update of his long-running musical spoof poking fun at the assorted absurdities of the Great White Way. $45–$47.50. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8:15, Sat at 2:30, Sun. at 3:30 and 7:30. Food and drink available, optional *Stardust Theatre, Broadway at 51st St. (212-239-6200).*

Fuddy Meers—This is a deftly zany absurdist comedy by David Lindsay-Abaire, a young but already much-produced playwright. The heroine, Claire, suffers from psychogenic amnesia, waking up every morning as a blank slate, on which her husband and Kenny, her teenage son from a former marriage, must imprint the facts of her life, only to have her forget them overnight. The evening explodes with laughter, magisterially provided by J. Smith-Cameron and others. (Simon: 11/15/99.) $19.50–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 at 7. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane (212-307-4100).*

Fully Committed—For the price of an entrée, Becky Mode serves up all the splendors and miseries of restaurant life prepared to a fare-thee-well. Smartly directed by Nicholas Martin, and exuberantly enacted by Mark Setlock, this play is a day in the life of Sam, the young man and struggling actor who works the reservation phones in a four-star restaurant where table 31 seems to be the ne plus ultra of socio-gastronomic achievement. (Simon: 1/17/00.) $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. (212-239-6200).*

Godspell—Step aside, Tim Rice, Stephen Schwartz's musical presents an Off Broadway savior. $25–$40. Wed.–Sat. and Mon. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7. *Third Eye Repertory, 22 W. 34th St. (212-307-4100).*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—A German transsexual achieves self-actualization and tabloid fame through songwriting in this brave, beautiful rock musical by John Cameron Mitchell. Stephen Trask did the catchy music and lyrics; now starring Matt McGrath. $19.99–$49.50. Mon., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri. at 8 and 11, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 7. Through 4/9. *Jane Street Theatre at the Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. (212-239-6200).*

The Hologram Theory—A mystical club-kid thriller by Jessica Goldberg. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 4/19. *McGinn/Cazale Theater, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-279-4200).*

House Arrest—Anna Deavere Smith's latest one-woman show tracks the evolution of the American presidency. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Through 4/8. *The Joseph Papp Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change—They're here. They're straight. Get used to it. It's a daring innovation, perhaps, but this musical revue is about what, in the context of most contemporary musicals, seems an amusingly quaint subject these days—heterosexual love. $49.50–$55. Mon., Tues., Fri., Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Imperfect Love—Screenwriter-playwright Brandon Cole's romantic tale of a bungled play and backstage love. $35. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7. Through 4/16. *New York Performance Works, 128 Chambers St. (212-969-0166).*

It's Impossible to Sing and Play the Bass—Jay Leonhart (thrice named "Most Valuable Bassist" by the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences) performs twenty of his songs in this new musical. $20–$40. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Jewel Box Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Kiki & Herb: Playing for Time—The downtown duo open their first open-ended Off Broadway run, after practically reinventing cabaret theater with renditions of crooner classics and slightly less Algonquin tunes by the likes of Patti Smith and Christina Aguilera. $12–$15. Fri–Sun. at 7:30. *Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

King Without a Castle—A young man struggles with love in Candido Tirado's new play. Directed by Michael John Garces. $15–$20. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 2 and 6:30. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (212-354-1293).*

The Last Supper—A new musical about the drama behind Leonardo Da Vinci's famous painting. $20. Wed.–Sat. at 8. *St. Luke's Church Annex, 308 W. 46th St. (212-279-4200).*

Miss Lulu Bett—A 1920 play about an independent woman by Zona Gale. $15–$25. Tues.–Thurs. at 7, Fri. and Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 4/23. *Mint Theater, 311 W. 43rd St. (212-315-0231).*

Monster—Eek! Frank Hertle's comic mystery. $35. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 4/16. *Kaufman Theater, 534 W. 42nd St. (212-244-7529).*

Naked Boys Singing—Just like a musical revue, but without pants. $45–$65. Mon., Wed.–Fri., and Sun. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3. *Actor's Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. So. (212-463-0060).*

Our Sinatra—Kurt Stamm directs this tribute to Ol' Blue Eyes, now transferred from a successful run at the Algonquin Hotel. $50–$80. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Blue Angel Theatre, 323 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Over the River and Through the Woods—A comedy by Joe DiPietro about four meddling grandparents. $49.40. Mon., Tues., Fri., and Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (212-239-6200).*

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—There is a decent amount of merriment to be had from this revue. Inspired—or incited—by a homonymous travel guide, it pokes fun at every aspect of travel, from the hopeless phone calls for airline reservations to the joys of sandy Uzbekistan. (Simon: 12/15/97.) $20–$55; optional dinner 90 minutes before curtain. Mon. and Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Ibis Theatre, 327 W. 44th St. (212-239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show. $24.50–$49.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave. (212-477-2477).*

Sure of This One—Michael MacCauley's new one-man show. $28. Most nights at 8. Through 4/8. *Tribeca Playhouse, 111 Reade St. (212-532-8887).*

The Tale of the Allergist's Wife—Who would have expected from a campy downtown playwright a nicely structured, intelligently funny, satirically relevant uptown comedy? In Charles Busch's new play, the retired but still overactive allergist Dr. Ira Taub is married to Marjorie, an immobilized nervous wreck since the death of her therapist. She has read all the right books, and attended every conceivable concert, lecture, and exhibition. But, as a failed novelist, she cannot gain entry into the artistic and intellectual life she craves. If you seek an ideal cast, look no further. Linda Lavin, for whom the admiring Busch wrote Marjorie as, he says, a kind of King Lear, is that and more: Lady Macbeth, Willy Loman, Lydia Languish, and, better yet, herself at her dizzying best. (Simon: 3/13/00.) $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30, Sun. at 7. *MTC Stage 2 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

The Time of the Cuckoo—The classic romantic comedy about an American woman in Venice (Debra Monk) who finds love in a cute shopkeeper (Olek Krupa). By Arthur Laurents, author of *Home of the Brave, Invitation to the March,* and the books for *West Side Story* and *Gypsy.* $50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 5/7. *Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th St. (212-239-6200).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St.,* then a reception at *Vinnie Black's Vegas Room, Hotel Edison, 221 W. 46th St.,* with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and, with more than 4,000 performances, it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $65–$75. Thurs.–Sat. at 7, Sun. at 2. *(212-239-6200).*

Try to Remember: A Look at Off Broadway—Accomplished golden gal Rita Gardner looks back on 40 years in the theater, from her recent role in *Eleanor* to her 1960 success as "the Girl" in *The Fantastics.* $30. Sat. at 10. Through 5/6. *Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St. (212-674-3838).*

The Vagina Monologues—Eve Ensler's ode to fannyboos, nappy dugouts, twats, etc., returns for a second coming. What was once Ensler's one-woman show is now performed by trios of actresses. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 5, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (212-239-6200).*

Waste—This is a splendid mounting of Harley Granville Barker's 1907 play about what goes on behind the scenes in a British cabinet-elect and how a potential scandal ruins its brightest member's chances. With a number of sharply drawn characters, British society is magisterially evoked, and politics becomes as fascinating as it is fearsome. Under Bartlett Sher's cogent direction, we get fourteen resplendent performances. (Simon: 3/20/00.) $10–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *American Place Theater, 111 W. 46th St. (212-239-6200).*

The Waverly Gallery—Grande dame Eileen Heckert plays a Village art dealer who is forced to give up her gallery because of her age in a new play by Kenny Lonergan, author of *This Is Our Youth* and the recent Sundance hit *You Can Count on Me.* $40–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Promenade Theatre, 2162 Broadway, at 76th St. (212-239-6200).*

What You Get and What You Expect—Christopher Ashley (*The Country Club, Currently of Palm Beach*) directs Jean-Marie Besset's play about two architects vying for the world's first extraterrestrial commission: a monument on the moon. $45. Tues.–Sun. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. (212-460-5475).*

The Wild Party—The first of two new musicals with the same title, based on Joseph Moncure March's raucous Jazz Age poem about a soirée that ends in a police bust. Book, music, and lyrics by Andrew Lippa. The cast features heartthrob Taye Diggs, his girlfriend Idina Menzel, Brian d'Arcy James, and Julia Murney. $60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2:30. Through 4/9. *MTC Stage 1 at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (212-581-1212).*

Wit—Can a play be made out of the last hours of a professor of literature dying of ovarian cancer? A play that hinges on a close reading of Donne's Holy Sonnets? That, without slighting its seriousness, sees the comedy in dying? No? Think again: Margaret Edson, with her firstling effort, has managed it, and more. For this play alone, she should be handed the Harvard English department, along with her Pulitzer. (Simon: 9/28/98.) Now starring Lisa Harrow. Through 4/9. $40–$55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 3. *Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. (212-307-4100).*

Zona, the Ghost of Greenbrier—A West Virginia courtroom drama about a newlywed's murder. By Jan Buttram. $15–$30. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 4/16. *Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. (212-532-8887).*

Onstage

Prom Queens and (Drag) Kings

Late nights at KGB, accomplished gay theater company Big Art Group ('Clearcut, Catastrophe!') presents an absurd, Columbine-era high-school prom (featuring Vivian Bang and Jim Louis, pictured) that makes the pig's-blood shenanigans of 'Carrie' seem tame. (See "Off–Off Broadway.")

Photograph by James Nelson.

Off–Off Broadway

The Balladeer—Accomplished gay theater company Big Art Group (*Clearcut, Catastrophe!*) presents a high-school dance that makes *Carrie* look tame. $12. Fri. and Sat. at 10:30. Through 4/15. *KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-777-6088).*

Charlie Victor Romeo (Cockpit Voice Recorder)—A multimedia piece about death and high altitudes based on black box recordings. Thurs.–Sat. at 8. Through 5/27. *Collective Unconscious, 145 Ludlow St. (212-254-5277).*

Chekhov Vaudevilles—Eleven of Chekhov's vaudevilles in the renovated porn palace. $15–$20. Call for schedule. *Nada Show World Theater, 42nd St. and Eighth Ave. (212-586-7829).*

Dressing Room—A new musical comedy about the backstage shenanigans of a drag queen, a diva, and a starlet. Book and lyrics by Mimi Scott; music by Matthew Gandolfo. $30. Tues. at 8, Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/11 opening. *SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. (212-239-6200).*

Moving Bodies—Physics isn't just for Broadway anymore. Arthur Giron's new play, the first in the "First Light" festival at Ensemble Studio Theatre, tracks the life of Nobel-Prize winning physicist Richard Feynman. $15. Mon., Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. 4/5–4/29. *Ensemble Studio Theatre, 549 W. 52nd St.* (212-247-4982).

Notice of Default and Opportunity to Cure—John Clancy begs for mercy and rails against evil capitalists. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8. Through 4/22. *Present Company Theatorium, 198 Stanton St. (212-420-8877).*

Repertorio Español—Several performances in repertory, including several by acclaimed flamenco-dancer Pilar Rioja. $15–$40. Call for schedule. *Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. (212-889-2850).*

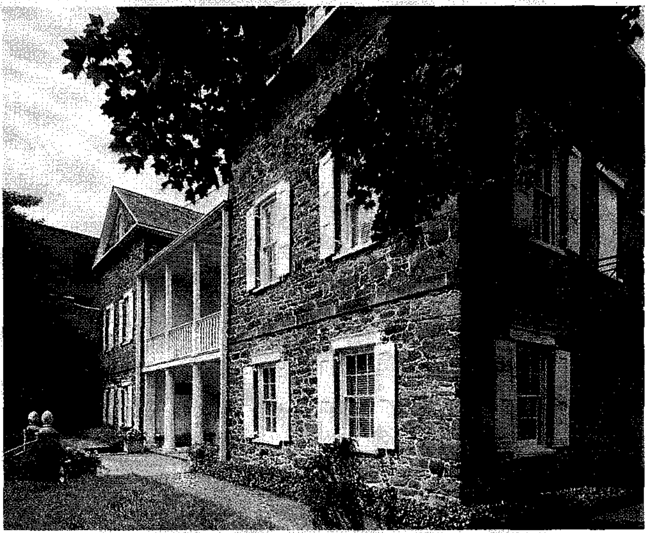
art

Mount Vernon...Catherine Opie...Japanese Treasures

On View

The Upper East (Country)side

The Abigail Adams Smith Museum is a civic treasure, one of only eight eighteenth-century houses left in the city. But the name is a blatant piece of false advertising. Abigail Adams Smith—daughter of John Adams, second U.S. president, and his wife, also named Abigail—built the house with her husband in 1799, but never lived there. For one thing, it was merely the carriage house to a much larger structure across the street, on a spread they called Mount Vernon. For another, like so many real-estate-obsessed New Yorkers, the couple got overextended and sold the estate before they ever moved in. Within a couple of decades, the main house burned down and the (rather large) carriage house became the Mount Vernon Hotel. Early Manhattanites would come up to 61st Street—at that time a bucolic country retreat—to bathe in the nearby East River and have a meal, stay a night, then head back downtown. Nevertheless, when it was opened as a museum by the Colonial Dames of America in the thirties, they set it up to look like a private upper-class home, as if the Smiths had lived there. A few years ago, the Dames decided to forgo the vague Adams connection for a more historically accurate exhibit, installing fittings replicating the hotel period: Duncan Phyfe furniture, a ladies' music room with pianoforte, and a tavern room. The new installation is complete, and the house has been renamed the Mount Vernon Hotel Museum & Garden. Just in time, too, because the new dynamics of the neighborhood may make it a destination again. The nearby Bridgemarket complex is drawing pedestrians eastward, and an immense apartment building is rising across the street, more or less on the site of the original manor house. Tuesday-night concerts in the garden during June and July will provide a perfect Upper East Side summer evening. Besides, the child-of-a-president angle is big this year—and candidate W, similarly, has nothing to do with the W hotel either. (421 East 61st Street; 212-838-6878; admission $4 for adults, free for kids under 12.) **CHRISTOPHER BONANOS**



Photograph by H. K. Barnett.

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Ross Braught—"Paintings, drawings, and lithographs of landscapes in the American West and the Virgin Islands, and still-life arrangements, by a Pennsylvania-born artist (1898–1983) who was a friend and colleague of Thomas Hart Benton; through 4/22. Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (212-535-8810).

Jessica Gandolf—Oil-on-panel paintings of old-time baseball players that isolate their subjects against minimal, often ethereal, backgrounds; through 5/6. Baumgold, 128 E. 72nd St. (212-861-7338).

Nancy Graves—Paintings, sculptures, and works on paper made between 1971 and 1989 by the artist, (1940–1995) whose forms and images draw on the natural world; through 4/20. Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (212-794-0550).

Derrick Guild—Paintings that depict loaves of bread isolated against dark, ambiguous backgrounds; through 4/22. Stone, 113 E. 90th St. (212-987-4997).

Gerhard Richter—A selection of the German artist's early paintings from the sixties and seventies; through 4/22. Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. (212-517-8677)

57th Street Area

George Baselitz—New paintings that depict dogs rendered in agitated impasto brushstrokes or portraitlike in black on veils of white and cream-colored enamel and continuing the artist's trademark compositional device of inverting his subjects; through 4/22. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (212-421-3292).

Dozier Bell—New paintings of landscapes and skyscapes; through 4/29. Schmidt-Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (212-888-1122).

Claudio Bravo—New paintings and works on paper by the Latin American realist; through 4/22. Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. (212-541-4900).

Anthony Caro—Painted steel sculptures; through 4/22. Ameringer/Hooward, 41 E. 57th St. (212-935-1110).

John Heliker—Drawings of landscapes, figures, and interiors; through 5/15. Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-307-5730).

Jane Freilicher—Paintings and works on paper that depict views from the artist's studio windows in Manhattan and Long Island; through 4/22. De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave. (212-262-5050).

Denise Mickilowski/Thomas Cordell—Still-life paintings/Paintings of landscapes and city views in Europe, Asia, and America. Through 4/15. Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (212-759-2345).

Fairfield Porter—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by the American artist and art critic known for his landscapes of Maine and Southampton, Long Island, and portrayals of his family and friends, including examples of his personal correspondence and articles for magazines; through 5/27. AXA, 787 Seventh Ave., at 51st St. (212-554-4818), Mon.–Fri. 11–6, Sat. 12–5.

Leon Polk Smith—Paintings and drawings of interlocking hard-edged geometric forms executed between 1940 and 1950; through 4/29. Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-6780).

Ursula Von Rydingsvard—New sculptures made of laminated cedar; through 4/29. Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (212-315-0470).

Andy Warhol and Cecil Beaton—Fashion illustrations and other drawings by Warhol from the fifties and sixties and drawings for stage designs by Beaton from the same period; through 5/20. Sheehan, 20 W. 57th St. (212-489-3331).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Christine Borland—A video projection, sculptures, and photographs that examine issues of genetic research, human engineering, and mortality, by the Scottish-born artist; through 4/15. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (212-343-2405).

David Bunn—"Double Monster," a new work from an ongoing project for which the artist has paired catalogue cards from the Los Angeles Central Library with the obsolete card catalogue from the Mutter Museum in Philadelphia, a nineteenth-century medical museum of pathological specimens; through 4/22. Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (212-925-4338).

Tom Burckhardt/Gaines Peyton—New works on paper that draw on Asian art, pre-Columbian objects, and fun-house murals/Paintings of birds and other wildlife set against abstract color fields; through 4/29. Bridgewater/Lustberg & Blumenfeld, 560 Broadway (212-941-6355).

Chuck Close—New portrait paintings of artists; through 4/29. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (212-431-9224).

Casey Cook—Paintings that combine figures, line, and text and use colors that suggest corporate lounges; through 4/22. Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. (212-965-0753).

Jackie Ferrara—Small sculptures, drawings, and models by this sculptor who is known for her large-scale public commissions; through 4/22. Taylor/TZ'Art, 470 Broome St. (212-966-9059).

Wade Hoefer/Maria Porges—New landscape paintings/Wax bottles constructed from the "lost wax" method. Through 4/22. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (212-219-2863).

Warren Isensee—Paintings of patterns that draw on fifties design and the geometric abstract paintings of Ellsworth Kelly and Myron Stout; through 4/19. Collins, 83 Grand St. (212-226-1861).

Richard Long—New slate sculptures and text works; through 4/29. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (212-431-3685).

Doug Martin—New paintings of Adirondack landscapes; through 4/22. Cowles, 74 Grand St. (212-925-3500).

John Okulick—New wood sculptures; through 4/26. Hoffman, 429 W. Broadway (212-966-6676).

Carolanna Parlato—New paintings; through 4/29. Pelavin, 13 Jay St. (212-925-9424).

Rebecca Purdum—New abstract paintings; through 4/22. Tilton, 49 Greene St. (941-1775).

Joie A. Rosen—Paintings of stripe compositions on silk stretched over a shallow box structure; through 4/15. Thatcher, 529 W. 20th St. (212-675-0222).

Chelsea

Rita Ackermann/Michael Lazarus—New paintings by both. Through 4/15. Rosen, 525 W. 24th St. (212-627-6000).

Beatriz Barral/Charles Gaines—Abstract paintings that incorporate unconventional materials and colors/Installations and wall works. Through 4/15. Weber, 529 W. 20th St. (212-691-5711).

Maureen Gallace—Paintings that depict rural and suburban scenes reduced to their most basic forms; through 4/29. 303, 525 W. 22nd St. (212-2555-1121).

Frank Gerritz—Graphite drawings on panels; through 4/22. Stark, 555 W. 25th St. (212-807-1051).

Augustus Goertz—Textural abstract paintings that allude to natural phenomena; through 4/22. Foster, 529 W. 20th St. (212-966-9024).

Steven Hull—Recent abstract paintings, in which a single work may comprise a stack of canvases of various sizes to which such unexpected materials as rugs, plastic flowers, and Chinese masks have been attached; through 4/29. Von Lintel & Nusser, 555 W. 25th St. (212-242-0599).

David Ireland—Sculptures, objects, photographs, and drawings spanning the past 25 years of the San Francisco artist's career; through 4/15. Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. (212-645-1701).

Anselm Kiefer—New paintings and two lead "bookcase" sculptures; through 4/15. Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. (741-1111).

Judy Ledgerwood/Jeremy Blake—Abstract paintings whose shapes and compositions echo the rhythms and improvisational riffs of jazz/A DVD projection. Through 4/15. Feigen Contemporary, 535 W. 20th St. (212-929-0500).

Paul Etienne Lincoln—An installation titled *Ignisfatuus* that takes its inspiration from the opera soprano Rosa Ponselle (1897–1981) and incorporates acoustic, mechanical, and chemical activity determined by lunar cycles, through 4/15, at Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave. (212-367-7474), and mechanized characters from the artist's ongoing series, "The World and Its Inhabitants," through 4/22, at Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. (212-462-2668).

Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle—New installations that incorporate video, photographs, and objects; through 4/29. Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. (212-633-6999).

Charlotte Moorman—Photographs, posters, program scores, and other ephemera relating to the life and career of this performance artist and avant-garde cellist (1933–1991) who collaborated with Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, Nam June Paik, and others; through 6/30. Bound & Unbound, 601 W. 26th St. (212-463-7348).

Catherine Opie/James Siena—Large-scale color portraits of lesbian couples and families that were taken by the artist during a road trip across the United States/Recent drawings and paintings on aluminum. Through 4/15. Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 W. 26th St. (212-352-8872).

Ester Partegàs/Donna Nield—A three-field slide projection based on a series of animated drawings that depict a plastic supermarket bag moving across the sky/New sculpture; through 4/24. De Chiara/Stewart, 521 W. 26th St. (212-967-6007).

Ugo Rondinone—"Target" paintings, a film installation, and large-scale color photographs by the Swiss artist; through 4/15. Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. (212-243-0200).

Amy Sillman—Recent works on paper that depict miniature populations, fantastical flora and fauna, and fragmented bodies and spaces; through 4/29. Sikkema, 530 W. 22nd St. (212-929-2262).

Cary Smith—Recent paintings that depict vertical bands of vivid color; through 4/15. Eller, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-6411).

Amy Steiner/Dodi Wexler—New color photographic portraits/Paper constructions that incorporate 3-D, photographs, and natural and found materials; through 4/22. Klagsbrun, 526 W. 26th St. (212-243-1059).

Jess von der Ahe—Abstract paintings executed in gold leaf and the artist's own blood; through 4/29. Grimm, 505 W. 28th St. (212-564-7662).

Dan Walsh—New abstract paintings that combine lines, squares, and circles both as outlines and concrete shapes; through 4/15. Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. (212-255-1105).

Otto Zitko—An on-site wall drawing and paintings on aluminum panels; through 4/15. Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. (212-242-7727).

Other

Doug Edge—Works by the California artist that combine photography, sculpture, and painting; through 4/8. Mansion, 54 St. Marks Place (212-505-7055), Wed.–Sat. 12–6.

Michael Madore—Enamel-on-paper paintings from 1979; through 4/23. Bodell, 13 E. 7th St. (212-477-1820).

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Sculpture Center—167 E. 69th St. (212-879-3500). "Transposed: Analogs of Built Space," works that engage the idiom of architectural models, drawings, and plans, by Bennett, Brower, Cambre, Komatsu, Lehmann, Oppenheimer; through 5/6.

57th Street Area

Findlay—41 E. 57th St. (212-486-7660). Works from the thirties and forties by American artists who were influenced by Native American art, among them Barnett, Bisstram, Busa, Dehner, Graham, Pollock, Pousette-Dart, Smith, Wheeler; through 5/13.

Rosenfeld—24 W. 57th St. (212-247-0082). New mixed-media assemblages by Bettye Saar; "True Grit," paintings, drawings, and assemblages dating from the fifties through the early seventies, by Bourgeois, Bontecue, DeFeo, Falkenstein, Grossman, Nevelson, Spero; through 5/9.

Spanierman—45 E. 58th St. (212-832-0208). "America Gone Modern: From the Twenties Through the Sixties," works by Avery, Bisttram, Calder, Marin, Morris, Sheeler, Tobey, others; through 4/29.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Artists Space—38 Greene St. (212-226-3970). "Echo," video, photographs, and installations by Binor, Donnelly, King, Nakamura; *Where the Lion Goes Through: Architecture of an Action*, an installation by the artist team Dolores Zinny and Juan Madigan; short video works by Balaban, Neff, Martinez, Wright; through 5/20.

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

Dorsky—379 W. Broadway (212-966-6170). Drawings, maquettes, and other artworks relating to environmental sculptures, by Goldsworthy, Long, Nash, Nemitz, Sonfist, Zimmerman; through 4/29.

OK Harris—383 W. Broadway (212-431-3600). Works by Gelfman, Okhsteyn, Piedilato, Salt, Stavitsky, Suttle; through 4/22.

Thread Waxing Space—476 Broadway (212-966-9520). "Achieving Failure: Gym Culture 2000," an exhibition curated by Bill Arning of works by 29 contemporary visual and performance artists that explore the gym as a stimulus for preoccupations with the body, identity, and spectatorship; through 4/29.

Chelsea

Art Resources Transfer, Inc.—210 Eleventh Ave. (212-691-5956). *EQuinox*, a computer-animated installation by Susan Dallas-Swann, Gerald, Zlata Baum, and Jamy Sheridan, through 4/29; "Conversation" exhibition of works by Martha Keller and Karen Shaw, through 4/30.

Kaplan—416 W. 14th St. (212-645-7335). Works by Adler, Coolidge, Dodge, Floyer, Fraser, Gillick, Gaskell, Monk, Yasinsky, others; through 4/15.

Metro Pictures—519 W. 24th St. (212-206-7100). Works by Lawler, Oursler, Sherman, Simmons, Wilson; through 4/15.

White Columns—320 W. 13th St. (212-924-4212). "Posers," works that explore the representation of self through assuming the role of a character, by Arnardóttir, Burke, Chesnut, Goicolea, Levy, others; through 4/30.

Photography

Juan Carlos Alom—Recent work that explores hidden violence, by a Cuban photographer; through 5/6. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (212-223-1059)

Americas Society—680 Park Ave. (212-249-8950). "Picturing Guatemala: Images From the CIRMA Photography Archive, 1870–1997," the first exhibition to explore the history of photography in Guatemala, including, among other works, a photographic album by Eadweard Muybridge from 1875 and images by the nineteenth-century ethnographic photographers Emilio Herruger and Alberto Valdeavellano; through 4/16.

Gary Beeber—Poetic images of architectural details, machinery, and graveyards, taken all over the United States and Europe; through 4/25. Generous Miracles, 529 W. 20th St. (212-352-2858).

Kate Belton/Nic Nicosia—Photographs of scenes constructed by the artist from such household products as flour, salt, and sugar; through 4/29/Three short films made by the photographer since 1997; through 4/29. P.P.O.W., 476 Broome St. (212-941-8642).

Sonja Braas—Photographs of real and artificial landscape environments; through 4/22. Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. (741-3318).

John Brill—Recent silverprints; through 4/15. Kent, 67 Prince St. (212-966-4500).

Chuck Close—New work, including color digital inkjet portaits of artists, black-and-white digital ink-jet prints of actors, and daguerreotype self-portraits and diptychs of nude torsos; through 4/22. Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. (212-759-7999).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (212-860-1777), Tues.–Thurs. 10–5, Fri. 10–8 (voluntary contribution from 5–8), Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $6, $4 students and seniors. "Picturing Business: The Photography of *Fortune*, 1930–1965." Photographs by Margaret Bourke-White, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, and others that were commissioned for the magazine founded by Henry R. Luce in 1930; through 4/9. . . . "Gary Schneider: Genetic Self-Portrait." A series of fourteen works comprising 55 photographs that depict the artist's transformations of X-ray images of his own genetic materials; through 4/9.

Robert Glenn Ketchum—Landscape photographs by Ketchum and embroideries based on his photographs by the Suzhou Embroidery Research Institute of Mainland China; through 5/13. Carter, 560 Broadway (212-966-1933).

Laurent Elie Badessi—Black-and-white photographs of nudes in dramatic landscapes; through 4/29. Cristinerose, 529 W. 20th St. (212-206-0297).

Antonio Lopez—Fashion drawings and photographs by the Puerto Rican–born fashion illustrator (1943–1987) who worked for *Women's Wear Daily,* the New York *Times, Harper's Bazaar,* and other publications; through 4/15. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (212-966-6223).

Danny Lyon—Vintage prints from the photographer's "Texas Prison Series" of the late sixties; through 4/22. Houk, 745 Fifth Ave. (212-750-7070).

Michal Macku—Manipulated photographs by a Czech artist; through 4/28. Stevenson, 338 W. 23rd St. (212-724-9315).

Mary Ellen Mark—Images of idiosyncratic moments drawn from the last 35 years of the photographer's work; through 4/22. Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. (212-334-0010).

Fred W. McDarrah—Portraits of politicians and others from the sixties to the present; through 4/23. Great Modern Pictures, 17 W. 24th St. (212-242-2581).

On View

Homebodies

For her 1994 'Portrait' series, Los Angeles–based photographer Catherine Opie travelled through nightclubs and bedrooms to document gay and lesbian S&M communities. For 'Domestic,' her new series of large-scale color prints and smaller still-lifes, the photographer drove a 23-foot Coachman RV cross-country to photograph lesbian couples where they live (pictured, 'Kristopher & Clara, Tulsa, Oklahoma,' 1998). At Gorney Bravin + Lee, 534 West 26th Street; through April 15.

Photograph courtesy of Gorney, Bravin + Lee.

Viggo Mortensen—New photographs and mixed-media works; through 5/13. Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave. (212-989-7600).

David Plowden/Zeke Berman—A survey of the photographer's images of American cityscapes, small towns, steam engines, and bridges/Early still-life compositions by the conceptual artist. Through 4/29. Miller, 20 W. 57th St. (212-397-3930).

Louis Robert—The French photographer's portraits and views of landscape and architecture from the early 1850s; through 4/15. Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. (212-752-1223).

Gary Schneider—"Specimen Drawings," large prints made from microscope slides; through 4/22. Barefoot, 580 Broadway (212-625-8899).

Joseph Sudek—Works by the Czech master from the Brumlik Collection, including landscapes, tree studies, modernist still-lifes, the interior of St. Vitus Cathedral under reconstruction, and images of his garden shot from his studio window; through 4/15. Klotz, 22 E. 72nd St. (212-327-2211).

Arthur Tress—Black-and-white photographs from the recent monograph *Male of the Species* (Fotofactory Press) that suggest male dreams, fantasies, and fears; through 5/13. Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave. (212-242-7767).

Oliver Wasow—Fantasy landscapes created through a combination of digital technology, image appropriation, and traditional photography; through 4/29. Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Gary Schneider—"Specimen Drawings," large prints made from microscope slides; through 4/22. Barefoot, 580 Broadway (212-625-8899).

Arthur Tress—Black-and-white photographs from the recent monograph *Male of the Species* (Fotofactory Press) that suggest male dreams, fantasies, and fears; through 5/13. Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave. (212-242-7767).

Oliver Wasow—Fantasy landscapes created through a combination of digital technology, image appropriation, and traditional photography; through 4/29. Borden, 560 Broadway (212-431-0166).

Museums

American Craft Museum—"Defining Craft 1: Collecting for the New Millennium." A selection of works from the museum's permanent collection and works that have been promised as gifts; through 5/7. 40 W. 53rd St. (212-956-3535), Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., and Sun. 10–6, Thurs. 10–8 (pay what you wish 6–8); $5, $2.50 students and seniors.

American Museum of Natural History—"The Butterfly Conservatory: Tropical Butterflies Alive in Winter"; through 5/29. . . . "Capturing Time: The New York Times Capsule"; through 4/20. . . . "Body Art: Marks of Identity." The history of body art in the U.S., Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and elsewhere, highlighting objects and practices dating back to circa 2000 B.C.; through 8/30. Central Park West at 79th St. (212-769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $8 suggested contribution, $6 students and seniors, $4.50 children.

Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts—"Roman Glass: Reflections on Cultural Change." More than 200 glass works from the collection of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology that were made in Rome between the late second century B.C. and the early seventh century A.D.; through 6/11. 18 W. 86th St. (212-501-3000), Tues.–Sun. 11–5 (Thurs. to 8); $2, $1 students and seniors.

Brooklyn Museum of Art—"Realm of Marvels: Building Collections for the Future." Works from almost every major area of the museum's holdings, representing nearly every culture and almost all of recorded time; through 6/18. . . . "African Masterworks From the Collection of Beatrice Riese." African art collected by the painter Beatrice Riese, who has lived in New York since 1949; through 9/10. . . . "The Guennol Collection: Cabinet of Wonders." Olmec jade carvings, pre-Columbian textiles, American folk art, and works by de Kooning, Cornell, and other twentieth-century artists that were given to the museum by Alastair Bradley Martin and his wife, Edith Park Martin; through 5/7. . . . "One Hundred Famous Views of Edo." An exhibition of a rare complete set of Utagawa Hiroshige's 1856–58 wood-block-print series from the museum's permanent collection; through 4/23. . . . "Artists Books." Fifty books made in the nineties by Brooklyn-based artists, among them Louise Bourgeois, Doug Beube, and Janet Zweig; through 4/16. . . . "Carved Memories: Tombstones of the Russian Jewish Pale, Photographs by David Goberman." Images of Jewish tombstones in Russia taken over a period of 75 years; through 4/30. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. 11–6 (till 11 P.M. on the first Saturday of every month), Sun. 11–6; $4, $2 students and seniors.

China Institute—"Dawn of the Yellow Earth: Ancient Chinese Ceramics From the Meiyintang Collection." Sixty-three works from Chinese cultures dating from the Neolithic period to the Warring States (5000–300 B.C.E.); through 6/18. 125 E. 65th St. (212-744-8181), Mon.–Sat. 10–5, Tues. and Thurs. 10–8, Sun. 1–5; free.

Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution—"National Design Triennial: Design Culture Now." Recent works by 83 American designers and design firms; through 8/6. 2 E. 91st St. (212-849-8300), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 12–5, Tues. 10–9 (5–9, free admission); $8, $3 students and seniors.

Dahesh Museum—"Overcoming All Obstacles: The Women of the Académie Julian." Paintings, works on paper, and photographs by women artists who studied at the Académie Julian in Paris, among them Cecelia Beaux, Elizabeth Jane Gardner, Anna Klumke, and Käthe Kollwitz; through 5/13. 601 Fifth Ave., at 49th St. (212-759-0606), Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Robert Irwin: *Excursus: Homage to the Square*"; through 6/18. . . . "Donald Judd *Untitled*, 1976." A piece from 1976 that is considered one of the late artist's seminal works and comprises fifteen plywood boxes; through 6/18. . . . "Thomas Schütte: Part III: *In Medias Res*"; through 6/18. . . . "Time Traced: Rodney Graham and Vera Lutter"; through 6/18. 548 W. 22nd St. (212-989-5566), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $6, $3 students and seniors.

Drawing Center—"James Castle: House Drawings." The first New York exhibition of drawings and paper constructions by the self-taught artist from Idaho; through 5/4. 35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166), Tues.–Fri. 10–6, Sat. 11–6; donation suggested.

Frick Collection—1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $7, $5 students and seniors (admission free on Dec. 19, 1999); children under 10 not admitted.

Grey Art Gallery—"Sheer Realities: Power and Clothing in the Nineteenth-Century Philippines." An exhibition organized by the Asia Society of clothing, accessories, paintings, lithographs, drawings, and photographs that reflect the external and indigenous cultural influences in the Philippines over the past century; through 4/22. 100 Washington Square East (212-998-6780), Tues., Thurs., Fri. 11–6, Wed. 11–8, Sat. 11–5: $2.50 suggested donation.

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum—"The Worlds of Nam June Paik." The first American retrospective of the Korean-born multimedia artist since 1982, including sculptures, installations, videotapes, and projects for television; through 4/26. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (212-423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 9–6, Fri. and Sat. 9–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $12, $7 students and seniors.

Japan Society—"For the New Century: Japanese Treasures From the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco." Paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and laquerware spanning 3,000 years; through 7/9. 333 E. 47th St. (212-832-1155), Tues.–Sun.11–6; $5 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"Paris in New York: French Jewish Artists in Private Collections." Paintings and sculpture by Jewish artists working in Paris from 1907 to 1939, among them Marc Chagall, Sonia Delaunay, Jacques Lipchitz, Amedeo Modigliani, Chaim Soutine, and Max Weber; through 6/25. . . . "Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture, 1890–1918." Artworks, books, letters, posters, and theater memorabilia demonstrating the influence of Jews on culture in turn-of-the-century Berlin; through 4/23. . . . "Pickles and Pomegranates: Jewish Homes Near and Far." An interactive children's exhibit that evokes life in two late nineteenth-century Jewish households; through 10/30.1109 Fifth Ave., at 92nd St. (212-423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $8, $5.50 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"The Art of Japan From the Mary Griggs Burke Collection." Paintings, sculptures, ceramics, and other works dating from the second millennium B.C. to the early nineteenth century; through 6/25. . . . "Painters in Paris: 1895–1950." Paintings by Bonnard, Braque, Chagall, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, and other artists who worked in Paris; through 12/31. . . . "Walker Evans." A retrospective of the American photographer (1903–1975) comprising some 175 vintage prints from public and private collections throughout the U.S. and Canada as well as from the photographer's archive, which was acquired by the Metropolitan in 1994; through 5/14. . . . "Perfect Documents: Walker Evans and African Art, 1935." Photographs by Evans depicting the African sculpture exhibited in MOMA's groundbreaking 1935 exhibition; through 9/3. . . . "Northern Drawings of the 15th and 16th Centuries in the Robert Lehman Collection." French, German, and Netherlandish drawings and illuminations; through 5/21. . . . "Tilman Riemenschneider: Master Sculptor of the Late Middle Ages." An international loan exhibition of carved-wood and stone works by the German sculptor (1460–1531); through 5/14. . . . "Ancient Faces: Mummy Portraits From Roman Egypt." Painted panel portraits made in Egypt from the first to third century A.D.; through 5/7. . . . "The World of Scholars' Rocks: Gardens, Studios, and Paintings." More than 30 scholars' rocks from the collection of the Richard Rosenblum family; through 8/20. . . . "Korean Ceramics From the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka." Forty-eight ceramic works dating from the twelfth to the nineteenth century; through 6/4. . . . "Celebrating the American Wing: Notable Acquisitions, 1980-1999"; through 11/12. . . . "Masterpieces of Photography From the Gilman Paper Company Collection"; through 5/23. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (212-879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $10 contribution, $5 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (212-923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September); $10, $5 seniors and students.

Morgan Library—"From Bruegel to Rubens: Netherlandish and Flemish Drawings." Northern European master drawings spanning the Gothic through the Flemish Baroque periods from the Morgan Library's collection, and a selection of works by artists working in the tradition of Van Eyck and Van der Goes; through 4/30. . . . "Sacred Songs: Illuminated Choir Books." Music manuscripts used in the liturgy of the Catholic church during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; through 5/14. 29 E. 36th St. (212-685-0008), Tues.–Thurs. 10:30–5, Fri. 10–8, Sat. 10:30–6; Sun. 12–6; $7, $5 students and seniors.

El Museo del Barrio—"Latin American Still Life: Reflections of Time and Place." Paintings, sculptures, and other works depicting still-life by twentieth-century Caribbean, Central American, and South American artists, among them Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo, and Wilfredo Lam; through 5/21. . . . "Franco Mondini Ruíz: *Mexic.*" A site-specific installation depicting a romanticized, miniature cityscape of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán, now Mexico City; through 5/21.1230 Fifth Ave. (212-831-7272), Wed.–Sun. 11–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Museum for African Art—"Hair in African Sculpture and Art." An exhibition exploring the significance of hair in African society through masks and figures, combs, beads, headrests, and an actual Ghanaian barber shop; through 5/28. 593 Broadway (212-966-1313), Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5:30, Sat. and Sun.12–6; $5, $2.50 students, seniors, and children.

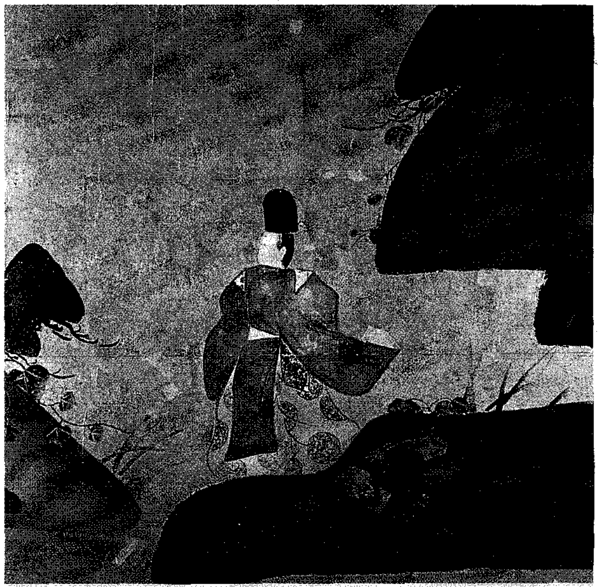
Museum of American Folk Art—"Millennial Dreams: Vision and Prophecy in American Folk Art." An exhibition of visionary objects and paintings by self-taught artists on loan from major public institutions and private collections; through 5/14. Lincoln Square (212-595-9533), Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Jewish Heritage—"Children of a Vanished World: Photographs by Roman Vishniac." Images of children living in cities and villages in eastern Europe in the thirties; through 6/4. 18 First Place, Battery Park City (212-968-1800), Sun.–Wed. 9–5, Thurs. 9–8, Fri. 9–2, eve of Jewish holidays 9–2, closed Sat. and Jewish holidays; $7, $5 students and seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—"Making Choices," the second cycle of MoMA2000 exhibitions: "The Marriage of Reason and Squalor." A survey examining opposites as they occur in single works of art; through 9/19. . . . "The Raw and the Cooked." Works by unschooled, outsider, and naive artists; through 9/19. . . . "Useless Science." The efforts of artists who mimic the methods and conventions of artists; through 9/19. . . . "The Dream of Utopia/Utopia of the Dream." Abstract and Surrealist works by Dalí, Ernst, Malevich, Mondrian, others; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Living 1." Post–World War I designs from the de Stijl, Bauhaus, and Contructivist movements; through 8/22. . . . "Walker Evans & Company." Photographs by Evans and by photographers who influenced him or were influenced by him; through 8/22. . . . "Modern Art Despite Modernism." Works by Albright, Balthus, Cadmus, Feud, Hopper, Rivera, others; through 8/22. . . . "Art Is Arp." Works from the twenties, including wood reliefs, string reliefs, cardboard cutouts, prints, illustrated books, collages, and sculpture; through 8/22. . . . "Giorgio Morandi Etchings." Etchings spanning 1912 to 1949; through 8/22. . . . "War." Works created in response to the threats and effects of mass mobilization and violence; through 8/22. . . . "Graphic-Photographic: The European Revolution in Graphic Design and Photography in the 1920s." Works by Herbert Bayer, El Lissitzky, László Moholy-Nagy, Aleksandr Rodchenko, and others; through 8/22. . . . "Projects 70: Shirin Neshat, Simon Patterson, Xu Bing." Banners that play with the written word, displayed on the museum's 53rd Street façade; through 5/1. 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480); Sat.–Tues., Thurs. 10:30–5:45, Fri. 10:30–8:15 (4:30–8:15 pay what you wish), closed Wed.; $10, $6.50 students and seniors.

Museum of the City of New York—"New York: Songs of the City." More than 50 pieces of lavishly illustrated sheet music for songs celebrating New York; through 9/10. . . . "This Land Is Your Land: The Life and Legacy of Woody Guthrie." An exhibition chronicling the life of the folk singer; through 4/23. . . . "The New York Century: World Capital, Home Town, 1900–2000." An exhibition of objects from the museum's collection conceived by the design firm Pentagram; through 7/9. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (212-534-1672), Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5 suggested contribution, $4 students and seniors.

Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology—"The Little Black Dress and Other Signs of Status." An exhibition exploring the meaning behind a range of iconic black objects, from the little black dress to combat boots; through 4/15. . . . "The Corset: Fashioning the Body." Corsets from the sixteenth century to the present, as well as corset-inspired fashions, archival photographs, posters, books, caricatures, and advertisements that document the evolution of corsetry; through 4/22. . . . "Girlfriend! The Barbie Sessions by David Levinthal." Forty large-format Polaroid photographs of the doll that return her to her fashion-model roots; through 4/15. Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (212-217-7642), Tues.–Fri. 12–8, Sat. 10–5; free.



On View **Y2K wasn't enough for you? Now the Japan Society is showcasing not just two but three millennia of Japanese art in their new exhibit, "For the New Century: Japanese Treasures From the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco." The 47 masterworks include prehistoric pieces from the Jomon through Kofun periods, Shinto and Buddhist works from the Kamakura period, and more recent hand scrolls, lacquerware, and screens from the past 500 years (pictured, detail of the Edo-period *Tales of Ise, Object 31*). At the Japan Society, 333 East 47th Street; through July 9.**

Photograph courtesy of the Japan Society.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"Picturing the Modern Amazon." Images of physically strong women in paintings, drawings, videos, sculptures, photographs, and other media by more than 60 contemporary artists, among them Matthew Barney, Judy Chicago, Nicole Eisenman, Jane Hammond, Mary Ellen Mark, Nancy Spero, and Cindy Sherman; through 7/2. 583 Broadway (212-219-1222), Wed. and Sun. 12–6, Thurs.–Sat. 12–8 (free Thurs. from 6–8); $6, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Historical Society—"Jessie Tarbox Beals: On Assignment." Works by America's first female photojournalist; through 7/9. . . . "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America." Photographs documenting lynchings in American from the 1870s through the 1950s; through 7/9. . . . "New York on the Brink! The Fiscal Crisis of the 1970s." Documentary photographs, newspaper headlines, political cartoons, and objects relating to New York's notorious fiscal crisis; through 5/7. . . . "John James Audubon: The Birds of Winter." Fifteen original watercolor paintings by the naturalist (1785–1851) depicting birds that can be found in New York during the winter months; through 4/30. 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $5, $3 seniors and children.

New York Public Library—"Drawings by Charles Addams." A rotating selection of drawings by the *New Yorker* cartoonist; through 6/30/01. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues. and Wed. 11–7:30, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center—"Greater New York." The first significant collaboration between P.S.1 and *MoMA*, an exhibition of works by more than 140 artists who have emerged as vital voices over the past five years; through 5/16. 22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084), Wed.–Sun. 12–6; $5 suggested donation.

Queens Museum of Art—"New York Noir: Crime Photographs From the *Daily News* Archive"; through 4/30. . . . "William Glackens: A Journey From Realism to Impressionism." A selection of paintings, works on paper, and notebooks by the Philadelphia-born artist, who became one of the Eight and worked in Paris, New York, and Cape Cod, most of them drawn from the Glackens family bequest to the Museum of Art, Fort Lauderdale; through 4/30. . . . "Queens Focus: Installation by Leung Chi Wo"; through 4/30. . . . "Community Space: Silk Paintings by Dr. Rikki Asher"; through 4/30. New York City Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens (718-592-9700), Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 12–5; $4, $2 students and seniors.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Collection in Context." A selection of paintings, photographs, sculpture, and works in other media from the museum's permanent collection; through 5/21. . . . "Images of Harlem: Selected Photographs of James VanDerZee." Images of Harlem in its heyday by the Massachusetts-born photographer who moved to New York in 1906; through 5/21. 144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500), Wed., Thurs, Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Biennial 2000." The museum's biannual survey of contemporary American art, featuring works in all media by 97 artists; through 6/4. . . . "Edward Hopper, Printmaker." More than 50 etchings and drypoints drawn almost entirely from the bequest of the artist's wife, Jo Hopper, which entered the museum in 1970; through 5/28. . . . "What's New: Recent Acquisitions in Photography." Works by Matthew Barney, Nan Goldin, Vik Muniz, Cindy Sherman, and others; through 5/21. . . . "Highlights From the Permanent Collection"; through 6/4. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (212-570-3676); Tues., Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8 (pay what you wish 6–8 on the first Thurs. of every month); $12.50, $10.50 students, seniors, and groups of fifteen or more.

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Correspondences: Isamu Noguchi and Ellsworth Kelly." Sculptures and drawings by both from the Whitney Museum's permanent collection; through 4/7. 120 Park Ave. (917-663-2550), Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. 11–7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—20 Rockefeller Plaza (212-636-2000). 4/5 at 10 and 2: "Photographs." On view from 4/1. 4/7 at 10 and 2: "Wine." On view from 4/1. 4/10 and 4/11 at 10 and 2: "Magnificent Jewels." On view from 4/8.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (212-606-0430). 4/5 at 10: "Sports Memorabilia." On view from 4/1.

Sotheby's—1334 York Ave., at 72nd St. (212-606-7000). 4/5 at 10:15 and 2: "Continental Furniture." On view from 3/31. 4/5 at 6:30: "Photographs from the Collection of 7-Eleven, Inc." On view from 4/1. 4/6 at 10:15 and 2: "Photographs." On view from 4/1. 4/11 at 10:15 and 2: "Important English and Continental Silver." On view from 4/7.

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restaurants

From Hearth to Home...Spring Fling...Telly's

Manhattan

Lower New York

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (212-406-2292). (I) ($).*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (212-966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ecco—Old-world charm, an excellent seasonal antipasto, and classic renditions of such Italian standards as pasta, veal chop, lobster fra diavolo, and osso buco. Very cozy narrow booths line the east wall, and tile floors take you back to the Gilded Age. Live piano music on Friday and Saturday night. *124 Chambers St. (212-227-7074). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Greatest Bar on Earth—This, the most casual component of the Windows on the World complex, has become a popular meeting spot for downtown office workers, curious club kids, and the inevitable tourists. The view, obviously, can't be beat, and the snacky menu includes global bites like fried calamari, barbecued ribs, and sushi. Live music Tuesday through Saturday. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Gubbio—Decorated with imported tapestries and pottery meant to evoke a medieval Umbrian hill town, this spacious TriBeCa restaurant features a seasonal Italian menu that strives to avoid culinary clichés. Choices include pork medallions with stewed cabbage and smoked ricotta, and lamb carpaccio with olive pesto. *223 W. Broadway (212-334-8077). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But your attention may very well be diverted by the eye-catching American food—seafood sausage with stewed white beans, potato-and-truffle ravioli with saffron cream, seared yellowfin tuna with caramelized foie gras—right in front of you. *4 World Financial Ctr. (212-786-1500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

The Independent—From the minute it opened, this tavernesque TriBeCa duplex has been a favorite of the fashionable neighborhood. The creative bistro menu includes cornmeal-coated calamari with green-chile tartar sauce, shiitake-seared salmon with cashew-scallion rice cake, and slow-roasted duck with blood-orange sauce. *179 W. Broadway (212-219-2010). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (212-228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Layla—A Middle Eastern feast, complete with gyrating belly dancer, brought to you by Drew Nieporent and his TriBeCa production team. Menu highlights include crabmeat phyllo, cinnamon-braised lamb shank with okra, and toasted couscous and almond ice milk. *211 W. Broadway, at Franklin St. (212-431-0700). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, Zeppole at the TriBakery, and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (212-219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Morton's of Chicago—The second New York location of the national steakhouse chain. Portions are huge, quality is consistent, and, in case you haven't noticed, beef is back. *90 West St. (212-732-5665). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has conquered TriBeCa. It's still virtually impossible to get a reservation, but the intrepid hordes can wait for a table to open up two doors down at Next Door Nobu. *105 Hudson St. (212-219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

The Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (212-233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Provence—Lots of people have got engaged in the charming garden at this authentic country French restaurant; even more have sampled the bourride, bouillabaisse, and bass flambé. If you can't actually make it to the Côte d'Azur, this is the next best thing. *38 MacDougal St. (212-475-7500). (M–E) AE.*

Sosa Borella—This full-service TriBeCa café is just as good for an afternoon espresso as for a full meal, not to mention the weekly tango lessons. Sandwiches come nearly two dozen ways; the Italian-Argentinean menu features entrées like Milanese

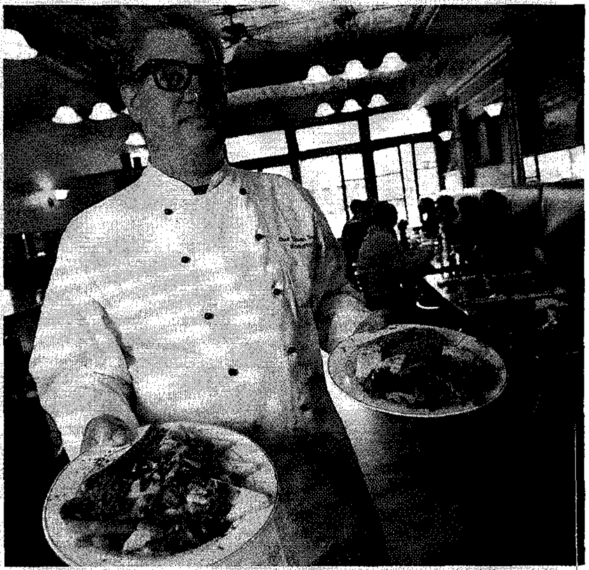
Opening

Tofu or Not Tofu

Vegans will be vegans, and carnivores will be carnivores, and in the minds of most chefs and restaurateurs, never the twain shall meet—at least to eat. But one all-embracing new restaurant caters nondenominationally to both lifestyles, a sort of culinary Switzerland where a typical order might consist of organic grilled marinated tofu with polenta and greens, steak au poivre, and lamb's head for four, all washed down with a Joseph Drouhin Pinot Noir. "Our mission is to extend the bistro experience to the vegan at every level," says chef Steve Smith (pictured), who owns Greenwich Village Bistro in partnership with his wife, Victoria, her sister Carla, and Carla's husband, Richard Palandrani, the architect responsible for the room's painted tin ceiling, comfortable oak bar, and French doors that open onto Father Demo Square.

Despite dabbling with soysage in an Austin tofu shop he owned in the seventies, the chef isn't a card-carrying vegetarian. "I'll eat meat if it's thrown at me," says Smith, who's toiled in kitchens high and low, from John Novi's DuPuy Canal House to El Teddy's. "That was *my* margarita recipe," he says, with equal measures of pride and remorse. "That recipe has ruined lives, marriages, and careers." Maybe so, but here Smith's instincts are pure: He uses organic produce ("when rationally possible," according to the menu) in dishes like his Eberly chicken chop, his whole Catskill trout, his salad Niçoise, and his lamb chili with couscous. And lest herbivores feel neglected, both the pâté and the burger come in traditional and meatless versions. That's what we call equal-opportunity eating. (13 Carmine Street; 212-206-9777.)

ROBIN RAISFELD



Photograph by Luke Hoverman.

steak and short ribs of beef. *460 Greenwich St. (212-431-5093). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (212-941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Wild Blue—In an intimate room that's warm and plushly comfortable but doesn't try to compete with the famous view, chef Michael Lomonaco's menu is solid, superlative American, with a touch of the steakhouse in sides like creamed spinach and butternut-squash hash. His flair for hearty he-man food like char-broiled strip steak and lamb T-bone chops still allows for subtle seasoning and artful presentations. Exceedingly moist chicken gets a Med-rim treatment with olives and preserved lemons, and buttermilk fried oysters with chipotle cream and spoon bread are an inspired take on an American classic. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7107). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Windows on the World—Chef and TV personality Michael Lomonaco supervises the kitchens of this landmark restaurant known for what may be the most spectacular view of Manhattan Island. His menu focuses on sophisticated renditions of American food, including stout-braised Black Angus short ribs with Maytag blue cheese, and lobster potpie with truffle cream, spinach leaves, and a chive biscuit. Be sure to take advantage of the restaurant's 60,000-bottle wine cellar. *1 World Trade Center, 107th floor (212-524-7000). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, East

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (212-620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Haveli—Haveli distinguishes itself from the 6th Street strip, for its food as much as its upscale décor. Possibly the only East Village restaurant with an *intentionally* shattered windowpane. *100 Second Ave., nr. 6th St. (212-982-0533). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Knickerbocker Bar and Grill—A subdued steakhouse with vintage items on the walls—Hirschfelds, copies of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and nineteenth-century curios. A sophisticated combination of gastronomics and history. *33 University Pl., at E. 9th St. (212-228-8490). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—One of the earliest pioneers on the East Village dining scene, this comfortable Mexican cantina is especially welcoming in warm weather, when the garden is a serene urban oasis. The grilled-vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (212-254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osso Buco—Popular Italian restaurant on a much-traveled Village corridor serving family-style portions of the eponymous house specialty, Caesar salad, fried calamari, and T-bone steak. *88 University Pl., nr. 11th St. (212-645-4525). Also, 1662 Third Ave., at 93rd St. (426-5422). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (212-388-0059). (I) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Bar Pitti—This Tuscan trattoria, with tables spilling out onto the sidewalk, has simpler, cheaper food than Da Silvano next door, but it's just as good a spot to sip an espresso and watch the Village foot traffic. Great fettunta. *268 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (212-982-3300). (I–M) ($).*

Elephant & Castle—For more than a quarter of a century, as the city's kitchens went pan-Asian and pan-Latino around it, this West Village landmark has satisfied cravings for basic American fare like burgers, omelettes, and Caesar salad. Sliced steak with Merlot sauce is about as highfalutin as the friendly spot gets. *68 Greenwich Ave. (212-243-1400). (I–M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Gus' Place—This welcoming Greek taverna in the West Village offers authentic Mediterranean meze and entrées; French doors open out onto warm evenings. The orzo with Gulf shrimp and the lamb-shank stifado are house specialties. *149 Waverly Pl. (212-645-8511). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Jekyll & Hyde—Can you guess the theme of this boisterous Village restaurant? Billing itself as a "haunted explorers' club," it offers interactive entertainment, special effects, and—so that famished explorers may keep up their strength—a menu of American fare like grilled tuna steak, pumpkin tortelli in sun-dried-tomato cream sauce, and "voodoo-spiced" Cajun steak. *91 Seventh Ave. S. (212-989-7701). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Osteria Fiorentina—Live piano and violin music lend this casual Italian restaurant that old-time Village ambience. The menu offers standards like risotti, open ravioli, zuppa di clams, and veal chops. *281 Bleecker St. (212-633-2941). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tio Pepe—A reliably festive spot for classic Mexican and Spanish fare, from tapas to paella Valenciana, with an enclosed sidewalk café and skylit garden room. *168 W. 4th St. (212-242-9338). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

Alva—Bare lightbulbs evoke Thomas Edison, the namesake of this sleek spot owned by Aureole chef Charlie Palmer, but Josh Capon's food is all very twentieth-century: potato-wrapped cod with citrus glaze, charred sirloin with red-onion marmalade, foie gras parfait with roasted apple chutney. *36 E. 22nd St. (212-228-4399). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Back Porch—An ideal spot for Murray Hill residents to meet for drinks alfresco and southwestern-flavored fare. Sit outdoors as long as the weather holds. *488 Third Ave., at 33rd St. (212-685-3828). (I) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Bambou—There's a hint of the tropics on East 14th Street: ambitiously nouvelle renderings of Caribbean cuisine, like crab cakes with avocado and molasses or eggplant soup with coconut and curry. The relaxing, palm-fronded dining room and bar attract the expected boldface names and beautiful faces. *243 E. 14th St. (212-358-0012). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bolo—There's nothing discreet about Bobby Flay's neo-Spanish cooking. In a room that reminds you of Gaudí by way of Pee-wee Herman, Flay turns out fiery, bold dishes like oven-roasted mushrooms with goat cheese and chili oil as well as paella with curried shellfish and chicken. *23 E. 22nd St. (212-228-2200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . . ? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (212-460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Candela—These vast premises have been decorated with mission-style furniture, iron sconces, and what seems like a thousand votive candles. Chef Joseph Macri's New American menu features signature dishes like the Candela seafood platter, miso-glazed black cod, and Asian barbecued pork chop. The Sunday brunch costs $10.95, prix fixe. *116 E. 16th St. (212-254-1600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Commodore Grill at the Grand Hyatt Hotel—Commuters and business travelers will be glad to know they can enter this formal hotel restaurant directly from Grand Central Terminal, whether for a quick drink in the cigar bar or a full meal of such

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French-influenced American fare as foie gras French toast, tuna tartare, and ribeye of veal with Swiss chard. *42nd St. and Lexington Ave. (212-850-5999). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, dependable establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with chipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (212-679-6812). (M) MC, V.*

Gramercy Tavern—As a second act to Danny Meyer's much-loved Union Square Cafe, this Flatiron American standout doesn't disappoint. The main dining room manages to be both impressive and cozy, the service superlative, and Tom Colicchio's food inspired. For lesser appetites and lower budgets, the bar menu in the Tavern Room is equally delicious. Orchestrate your own cheese course and sample the varied selection of wines by the glass. *42 E. 20th St. (212-477-0777). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (212-481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Halles—Even though it hasn't been around forever, this utterly perfect re-creation of a Left Bank bistro seems like it has. This is the place to come for onion soup, steak-frites, celeri rémoulade, crème caramel—that sort of thing. *411 Park Ave. So., bet. 28th and 29th Sts. (212-679-4111). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, plundering the ingredients of the American Southwest for such mouthwatering creations as roasted-garlic shrimp tamales and ancho-honey-glazed salmon. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun, especially for those partaking of the house drink, a cactus-pear margarita. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (212-807-7400). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Novitá—A beautiful Flatiron restaurant with upscale, nouvelle Italian. Try, especially, the handmade pastas, which seem to have only beneficial effects on all the fashion types and Elite models who've made this room their home away from home. *102 E. 22nd St. (212-677-2222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oyster Bar—When a fire temporarily shuttered this Manhattan landmark, its long-faithful clientele were bereft, unsure of what to do with themselves at lunchtime. The doors have reopened, the vaulted ceilings have been (for the most part) repaired, and the regulars are taking their places at the counter. Famous for its 25 varieties of oysters, extensive wine selection, and comprehensive seafood preparations, the restaurant is a magnet for commuters and tourists alike. *Grand Central Terminal, 42nd St. and Vanderbilt Ave. (212-490-6650). (M) AE, CB, DS, MC, V.*

Park Bistro—Provençal offerings prepared and served with notable agility in an intimate—sometimes crowded—setting. *414 Park Ave. at 28th St. (212-689-1360). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Verbena—Diane Forley's seasonal American cuisine is at once delicate and deliciously satisfying; the room, similarly, pulls off the neat trick of feeling luxurious and minimalist at the same time. The menu is whimsically divided into two categories—fruits and vegetables, and fish, birds, and meats—with such appealing entries as butternut squash ravioli with roasted orange sauce, and rack of lamb with Yorkshire pudding. In summer, demand a garden table. *54 Irving Pl. (212-260-5454). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

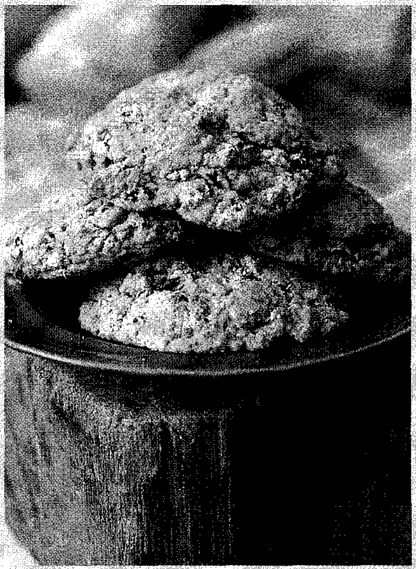
Ben's Kosher Delicatessen—This casual delicatessen—the Art Deco–ish Manhattan offshoot of a Long Island chain—brings a full roster of pastrami, corned beef, sour pickles, potato latkes, and other highlights of kosher cooking to the garment district. All baking is done on the premises, and for those who hanker for something a little stronger than Dr. Brown's, there's a full bar. *209 W. 38th St. (212-398-2367). (I) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (212-243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (212-989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Fusion@Ohm—One of the new crop of all-in-one entertainment centers: dinner, dancing, and the ever-popular lounging on velvet furniture. Plus an international fusion menu that features Vietnamese vegetable spring rolls, rigatoni bolognese, and pistachio-crusted chicken breast with morel sauce. *16 W. 22nd St. (212-229-2000). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Shopping **Urban Greenmarketers who stock up on hearth-baked bread from the Rock Hill Bakehouse stand every weekend might have noticed a sweet new development alongside the rustic spelt and sourdough loaves. The cult bakery's buttery jumbo biscotti (chocolate-almond and hazelnut), puffy oatmeal cookies studded with chunks of Callebaut chocolate, fudgy brownies, and three varieties of muffins are finally making their downstate debut. "We're baking pastry like they did in the nineteenth century," says land surveyor turned pâtissier Matt Littrell, who waits until his bread-baking colleagues have retrieved their loaves and the stone oven starts to cool before he bakes his old-fashioned sweets, which are available Sundays at Tompkins Square Park.**



Hush—This Flatiron venture is part bar, part nightclub, part restaurant. If you find that last part the most interesting, you'll appreciate chef John Tesar's New American menu, served in shareable portions. *17 W. 19th St. (212-989-4874). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Madri—This Chelsea mainstay has long enjoyed a reputation for informality and flavorful Italian fare. The garden is a wonderful warm-weather spot for a light lunch of salad and pasta or a more substantial repast like osso buco with gremolata or risotto with lemon and zucchini. *168 W. 18th St. (212-727-8022). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Lola—Lola's famous fried chicken is one of those dishes whose popularity guarantees it a perpetual place on the menu, but the kitchen has much grander aspirations. Think seared-tuna-and-seaweed salad with black rice and tobiko caviar, and paella de mariscos with grilled garlic flatbread. There's live music Tuesday through Saturday and a justly famous gospel brunch on Saturdays and Sundays. *30 W. 22nd St. (212-675-6700). (M) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cucina & Co.—This market-style takeout shop and café is ideally situated in the lobby of the MetLife Building to catch the crush of commuters passing through Grand Central. Breakfast pastries, specialty sandwiches, baked pastas, steak-frites, and "Dinners for Two" keep the worker bees fueled throughout the day. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-682-2700). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Della Femina—Jerry Della Femina tapped Kevin Penner, the very talented chef from the adman's Hamptons hot spot, to supervise the stoves at his Manhattan outpost. His city food places the same premium on high-quality ingredients in dishes like day-boat halibut, langoustines with black truffles, and rib-eye steak. Sit at the bar, converse with the very able and accommodating bartender, and try to guess the identity of every A- and B-list celebrity in the collage of caricatures. *131 E. 54th St. (212-752-0111). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (212-754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Photographs by Kenneth Chen.

Fresco—It's a family affair: The Scottos, including broadcasting star Rosanna, have created a room where you'll find stars at your feet and hearty portions of modern Tuscan fare (rich homemade pasta, thin and crispy grilled pizza, chops, and fish) on the table. *34 E. 52nd St. (212-935-3434). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Genki Sushi—Not your typical sushi bar but a moving conveyor belt with color-coded dishes that indicate the price of your lunch. This midtown branch is the first American outpost of an Asian megachain headquartered in Singapore. The restaurant, whose high-tech design incorporates a wall of exposed sound panels, Lucite chairs and stools, and a Warholian upholstery pattern, also offers bento boxes, vegetarian dishes, sashimi, and a varied sake selection. *9 E. 46th St. (212-983-5018). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Le Perigord—This romantic French restaurant near Sutton Place is famous for its classically prepared, elegantly presented French cuisine. The regular clientele, with a liberal smattering of celebrities and diplomats, is the type that dresses for dinner—a good thing, since jackets are required. Open Sundays. Private rooms available for parties. *405 E. 52nd St. (212-755-6244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Leopard—This townhouse restaurant named for the famous Italian novel is known for its bargain four-course prix fixe, including unlimited house wine. The enclosed garden and the French-Continental menu—roast duckling, stuffed quail, filet mignon—attract a loyal following. *253 E. 50th St. (212-759-3735). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Christian Delouvrier's masterful classic French cooking. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (212-339-6719). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Maloney & Porcelli—A midtown steakhouse with something extra, courtesy of consulting chef David Burke's contributions—including something called "angry lobster"—plus whole leg of lamb, an extensive wine list, and an innovative menu of American classics. A second-floor party room has a fireplace and skylights. *37 E. 50th St. (212-750-2233). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Michael Jordan's The Steak House N.Y.C.—It's hard not to feel like a king surveying his kingdom from the balcony of the awesomely renovated Grand Central Terminal. And it's easy, with David Walzog's high-protein menu, to eat like an athlete: Choose from Maine lobster, a 44-ounce double porterhouse for two, barbecued short ribs, pepper-crusted buffalo sirloin, and a superlative New York strip. There's a private dining room and a private smoking room. And if you (or your progeny) so desire, you can mark the occasion with a trip to the souvenir shop, for basketball- or steak-themed paraphernalia like baby rattles and dog bones. *23 Vanderbilt Ave., Grand Central Terminal (212-655-2300). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Monkey Bar—Since its swanky renovation by David Rockwell, this midtown landmark has undergone several chef changes. Andrew Chase has infused the menu and the retro-feeling dining room with new spirit by way of inspired new dishes like coriander-crusted duck breast with Bartlett pears, onion tart with potatoes and bacon, and loin of rabbit with confit and foie gras ravioli. Plus a special cocktail-hour canapé menu, to be enjoyed in the monkey-mural bar with nightly piano music. *60 E. 54th St. (212-838-2600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Naples 45 Ristorante e Pizzeria—This sprawling Italian restaurant and carry-out in the MetLife building serves authentic Neapolitan cuisine, including excellent thin-crust pizzas, baked to order by experienced pizza masters imported directly from Italy. Also try the twice-baked sandwiches and the wide array of wines by the glass. *200 Park Ave., at 45th St. (212-972-7001). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place. Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Oceana—Fish-savant Rick Moonen's extensive and excellent seafood menu make this room, reminiscent of the dining cabin on an elegant ocean liner, a favorite for business lunches and romantic evenings alike. The upstairs bar is a perfect retreat for cocktails and seafood snacks in midtown. *55 E. 54th St. (212-759-5941). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Oscar's—This contemporary American brasserie is named for the Waldorf-Astoria's longtime maître d', Oscar Tschirky, creator of such legendary dishes as the Waldorf salad and veal Oscar. The menu leans toward updated classics like yellowfin-tuna tartare and smoked Hudson Valley foie gras with truffled red-wine marmalade. Designer Adam Tihany transported the history-laden dining room into the twenty-first century with a much-needed face-lift. *Lexington Ave. at 50th St. (212-872-4920). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peacock Alley—Under talented chef Laurent Gras, the Waldorf's posh dining room has broken with mealtime tradition. Rather than offer straightforward appetizers and entrées, Gras divides his menu into categories like ocean/river (lobster soup flavored with chestnuts), field/forest (seaweed and field greens), black truffle (Venetian pasta), and farm (rabbit chop wrapped in pasta). And rather than price each individual dish, he charges by the number of courses one selects: $54 for three, $67 for four, and up. The sommelier's suggested wine pairings are available for an additional price, and jackets are required. *301 Park Ave., in the Waldorf-Astoria (212-872-4895). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Quantum 56—The restaurant at the Drake Swissotel that used to be Lafayette has finally reopened, this time as a New American dining room and cocktail lounge under the culinary direction of chef Joseph Fortunato. His menu ranges from the familiar to the less so, in dishes like shepherd's pie, seafood hot pot, and buffalo carpaccio with horseradish aioli. *65 E. 56th St. (212-756-3800). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (212-753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (212-867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Vong—Wow! This is Thai to die for. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's little Third Avenue–by–way–of–Bangkok palace was designed by architect David Rockwell, and it's a showy temple indeed—there's gold leaf on those walls. The menu's full of wonders, starting with the crab rolls and coconut-milk-and-galangal soup. *200 E. 54th St. (212-486-9592). (E) AE, CB, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Algonquin—Draws on its history as the fabled stomping ground of literary giants. The wood-paneled

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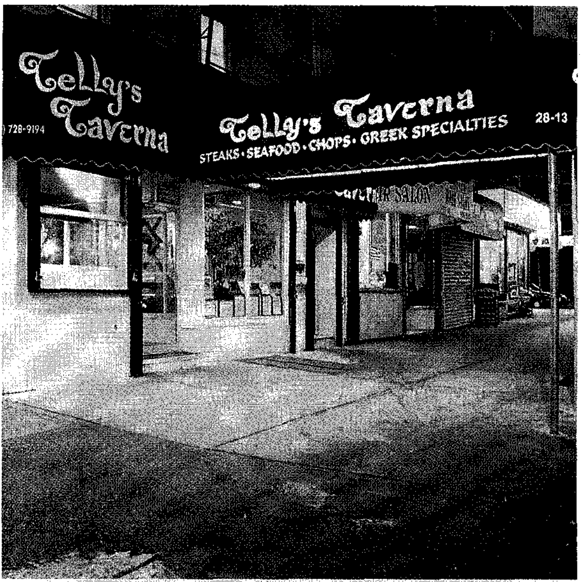


ASK GAEL

My pal is Greek, and he's homesick.

Take him on a mercy run to Telly's Taverna in Astoria, where, legend has it, there are more Greeks than in Athens. Telly's kitchen has its telling moments. I'd be homesick, too, after such fabulous grilled octopus; the garlicky tsatsiki; a sprightly tomato, red-onion, and feta salad; hunks of sausage that demand seconds; and this amiable waitress cheerfully and meticulously boning the fish. Alas, nostalgia doesn't blind me to disappointingly wimpy skordalia, greasy French fries, and red snapper that's been cooked to papier-mâche. "If I asked for my swordfish rare, could you do it?" I inquire. "No," the waitress replies. "I wouldn't want you to be sick." Can't fight an ancient culture, I guess. Fritters splashed with honey arrive as a farewell gift of the house. "But never on Saturday," the waitress advises. "We're too busy." (28-13 23rd Avenue, Astoria, Queens; 718-728-9194.)

sitting-room-like lobby still holds many imaginations captive. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Aquavit—An elegant midtown respite for sophisticated Scandinavian food, set in the glass-enclosed atrium of the former Rockefeller mansion. The menu offers delicately flavored Swedish versions of tea-smoked duck, lobster salad, venison, and, of course, gravlax and herring. *13 W. 54th St. (212-307-7311). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Ben Benson's Steak House—This rollicking steakhouse has long fed hordes of hungry, beef-eating businessmen and the people who love them. The festive air gets pretty thick by the bar, where cigars prevail, but the dining room is devoted entirely to the consumption of standards like lobsters, crab cakes, veal, and four cuts of steak. Free validated parking available. *123 W. 52nd St. (212-581-8888). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Christer's—Famous for its spectacular selection of salmon, this Scandinavian-inspired restaurant, designed by David Rockwell to resemble a colorful, cozy mountain lodge, is a great choice for contemporary renditions of seafood. Open Sundays. *145 W. 55th St. (212-974-7224). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (212-956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Da Rosina—A convenient pretheater location, specializing in homemade pasta and other casual Italian fare, like baked polenta marinara and veal scallopine. Try the $19.99 prix fixe dinner or the $12.95 lunch. *342 W. 46th St. (212-977-7373). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Estiatorio Milos—The New York outpost of a Montreal favorite, this stylishly spare Greek restaurant specializes in perfectly fresh seafood, arranged market-style on ice and grilled simply with organic herbs and imported olive oil. The fish selection runs from the familiar—red snapper, pompano—to the more exotic, like loup de mer, Moroccan pageot, and Greek dente. Finish with super-creamy goat's milk yogurt with honey. *125 W. 55th St. (212-245-7400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the coddled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. *60 W. 55th St. (212-688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a theater-district shrine to the stars of stage and screen. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks and herb-crusted rack of lamb to crab cakes and marinated duck breast. Theatergoers will want to know about the $23.50 prix fixe dinner, and music lovers about the live jazz and blues on Saturday night and the Sunday jazz brunch. *150 W. 47th St. (212-869-5482). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have earned him a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (212-489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Les Pyrénées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (212-246-0044). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and post-theater dining, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and, of course, multiple variations of the house drink. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (212-767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—This place is always buzzing, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (212-265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Sitar Indian Cuisine—This casual restaurant attracts office workers and midtown's ever-growing hordes of tourists, who come for house specialties like ginger chicken, lamb shaslik, onion bhajia, and the always-popular chicken tikka masala. *58 W. 56th St. (212-581-1155). (I–M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Tapika—Chef David Walzog's spicy cooking has transformed a formerly subdued space into a lively canteen with his version of haute Southwestern. Try the black-bean purée with chorizo and garlic flatbread or the grilled rabbit loin with cilantro oil and habanero sauce. The bar has its own snack menu and a super selection of microbrews and tequilas. *950 Eighth Ave., at 56th St. (212-397-3737). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Utsav Festive India—Only the bar of this regional Indian restaurant is located at street level; the contemporary dining room itself is built into a bridge spanning two midtown skyscrapers. The lunch buffet costs a paltry $10.95, while à la carte entrées include ginger rack of lamb, tandoori filet mignon, and Bengali fish paturi. The management promises a lineup of food festivals highlighting the varied cooking styles of the subcontinent. *1185 Sixth Ave., nr. 46th St. (212-575-2525). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Vago—This Northern Italian midtowner makes its own pasta and breads along with house specialties like warm sea-bass carpaccio, venison medallions sautéed with chestnuts, and roasted baby pheasant with black-truffle sauce. The wine list is extensive, and the dining room is adorned with frescoes, alabaster sconces, and cherrywood trim. *29 W. 56th St. (212-765-5155). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Brooklyn Diner USA—"The Finer Diner" serves a gourmet reworking of the foods of everyone's favorite borough, from fragrant chicken soup with challah to a "fifteen-bite hot dog," with refreshments like Penfolds Cabernet and chocolate malts. *212 W. 57th St. (212-581-8900). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home in I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (212-758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (212-371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (212-754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this

Photographs by Noah Sheldon.

spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (212-753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (212-265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Cafe Crocodile—A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan in an intimate, romantic townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Attracts serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. *354 E. 74th St. (212-249-6619). (M) AE, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (212-996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Fireman's of Brooklyn—The man behind midtown's nostalgic Brooklyn Diner expands on his outer-borough fantasy with this seafood house, which features a shrimp, oyster, and chowder bar; market-fresh fish; and landlubber options like filet mignon and "Bubba Fireman's chicken." *1081 Third Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-838-7570). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Jo Jo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. *160 E. 64th St. (212-223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mark's—Decked out like a private London club, with plump, tasseled pillows to nestle against. Fine French-American cooking (torchon of foie gras with cranberry-kumquat compote, pan-roasted lobster with Armagnac jus), award-winning wine list, and a Willy Wonka–worthy chocolate tea. *25 E. 77th St., in the Mark Hotel (212-879-1864). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (212-988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

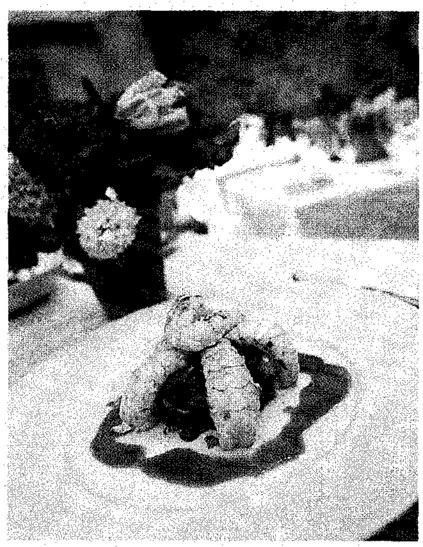
Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the haute neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (212-644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (212-935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Primavera—This elegant uptown restaurant serves sophisticated renditions of Northern Italian food, like baby eels with oil and garlic, and roasted baby goat. The comfortable wood-paneled room, lit with antique fixtures and filled with fresh flowers, brings a touch of luxury to the neighborhood. *1578 First Ave., nr. 82nd St. (212-861-8608). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tasting Wild Kingdom

To celebrate the season's edible greenery, Felidia chef Fortunato Nicotra has launched his annual profumi di primavera, *or spring-herb menu, a choice of seven dishes that highlight locally grown and foraged herbs and spring vegetables. Besides the familiar asparagus and artichoke, there are nettles (in a flan, with fava shoots and green-pea purée, at right), borage (stuffed into cheese ravioli), and ramps (in a langoustine scampi, at left), all scrounged from the Middle Atlantic wilderness. The dandelion greens that constitute his spring salad come courtesy of his boss, owner Lidia Bastianich, who hauls them in from Long Island.* (243 East 58th Street; 212-758-1479.)



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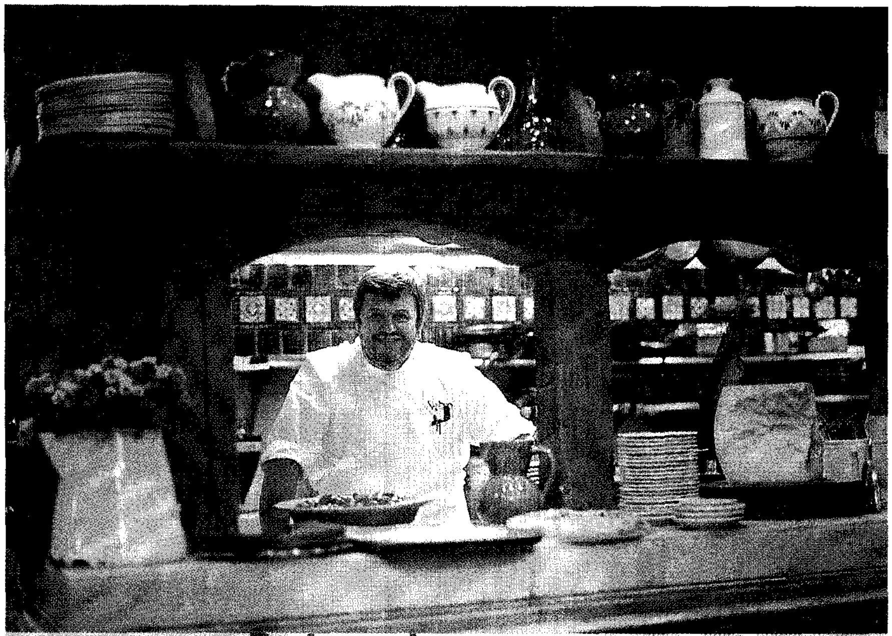


Restaurant

Roamin' Roman

Long before Terence Conran envisioned Guastavino's in the remote shadow of the Queensboro Bridge, Roman chef Sandro Fioriti (pictured above) colonized the far eastern fringes of 59th Street with Sandro's, the Roman trattoria that closed in 1993 after an eight-year run. Since then, he's cooked everywhere from East Hampton to St. Martin, where he recently opened three Italian restaurants. For the time being, his robust cuisine can be found here at NoHo's bustling Il Buco, where the entrées, like his signature porchetta alla romana (roast suckling pig) and grilled veal chop with potatoes and striped beans, change daily. (47 Bond Street; 212-533-1932.)

Sel & Poivre—Stanching the flow downtown for bistro fare. Regulars find what they are looking for in this quaint, countrified space. The country-French cuisine includes specialties like steak au poivre, bouillabaisse, and roasted chicken, and the prix fixe menus are a bargain. *853 Lexington Ave., nr. 64th St. (212-517-5780). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Trata—With its fish-market display, its Greek spreads and salads, and its simply grilled seafood (sushi-quality octopus, for instance), this bustling Upper East Side sideline of the Patsy's pizza chain offers an affordable, less dramatic alternative to Estiatorio Milos, where the chef used to work. *1331 Second Ave., nr. 70th St. (212-535-3800). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (212-877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (212-724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Restaurant 222—Cozy and romantic, with the feel of a townhouse, Frank Valenza's top-rated New American West Sider is a luxurious surprise in a neighborhood nearly bereft of them. The menu is full of high-ticket items like Beluga caviar, Kobe steak, truffles, and foie gras, which makes the $29.95 pretheater dinner, available from 5 to 6:30, a great deal. And now, lunch is served Tuesday through Friday. *222 W. 79th St. (212-799-0400). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sapphire Indian Cuisine—A couple of partners from TriBeCa's Salaam Bombay have brought regional Indian cuisine to Columbus Circle, an area in sore need of a tandoori infusion. The prix fixe lunch buffet is a bargain, and all the currently trendy territories (Goa, Gujarat) are well-represented. *1845 Broadway, nr. 61st St. (212-245-4444). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouthwatering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (212-496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (212-996-0660). (I) ($).*

Brooklyn

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Peter Luger—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

Swanson

continued from page 31

It's very scary. Say we're in our late twenties. It sounds better."

Psychoanalyst Dr. Gail Reed has noted the way housing hysteria has affected settled New Yorkers, especially with the steady approach of the luxury-decontrol thresher (which goes into effect once your income breaks $175,000 for two years running or your apartment's rent eases over the $2,000 barrier). "You think, boy, they live in this big apartment, and they probably own it. And that turns out not to be the case," she says. "You think that they're quite settled, but they're actually secretly very worried, alarmed, anxious that they're going to lose their apartment. The prices are especially a problem for people considering a divorce, when they discover that they can't afford to move just down the block." Forced exile to Wantagh is a sentence few West End Avenue types can bear to consider.

SO, HOW TO FIND SHELTER IN THIS TYPHOON of hype and escalating prices? A surprising number of brokers are sitting it out in their rent-regulated apartments. Even Barbara Corcoran had a hard time finding a Park Avenue co-op where she could stash her $3 million (and she's still waiting to hear from the board). Another broker declares from his rental, "If I had to spend right now, I wouldn't."

But if you have to, you'd better move quickly and be decisive, say brokers. And don't worry about being in love.

Also, prepare for a quick and decisive tussle. Brokers say you should be prequalified for a mortgage and try to line up some backup method of qualifying for the place that doesn't require a mortgage. Have that deposit money handy. It helps to remember that "this is a nonsmart environment," says Sotheby's International broker Dolly Lenz. "It has nothing to do with intelligence. It has to do with luck, almost."

"I've said to clients, you don't even want to know how much it costs," says broker Linda Stein of Edward Lee Cave. "In situations where there are big buyers and no inventory, the only way you can explain these numbers to them is to tell them how much they can get for their own apartments. Because those numbers are also ridiculous. If I take you shopping and you're hypothetically John McEnroe, you want this, this, and this. And it's $18 million. He says, 'Are you fucking crazy?' You have to say, 'But John, you can get $22 million for yours.' "

"Nobody knows how high it will go or when it will stop," says broker Greene. "We all know something's going to happen eventually. I mean, how greedy can everybody get? I guess pretty greedy." ■

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

in concert

Helen Schneider...Platée...Nancy Wilson

Preview
Center Court

Separated by thousands of miles geographically and scores of years historically, Versailles and dynastic China may on the face of it seem unlikely musical companions. But they converge harmoniously onstage in "Entertainment for Kings," the 92nd Street Y's centuries-spanning survey of royal court music. Andrew Appel, the director of Four Nations Ensemble, which performs with Music From China on period instruments, explains that the notion of juxtaposing Couperin's eighteenth-century *Le Dodo* and a Tang-dynasty composition actually came "pretty naturally" to him. "The French always loved things Chinese. At Versailles there was an interest in Chinese decoration, and Chinese lacquer was considered extremely valuable and beautiful," he says. Appel wants his audience to see the concert as a cultural journey highlighting the universal nature of music. Like the Chinese, "the French love to paint an image with music that evokes the natural world in a beautiful way," observes Appel. Though instrumental sound may at times conflict, the chamber musics of France and China do share aesthetics—nobility as a substitute for emotionalism, and ornament. "The French are masters of ornaments, which are the herbs and spices of their music," says Appel. And this East-West dynamism is stimulating not only for the audience. "It's very exciting for us as performers to be sitting side-by-side on the same stage taking turns playing pieces that complement and contrast," says Music From China's founder, Susan Cheng. Appel agrees: "They don't have to be two cultures; they can be *our* culture." (See "Classical Music.") **ANNA RACHMANSKY**

Classical Music

Vail Valley Music Festival—Performs a sampling of chamber music with works by Beethoven and Schubert, 4/5 at 8. *92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-966-1100); $30, $15 for students and seniors one hour before showtime.*

New York Philomusica—The sextet presents the music of Beethoven, Brahms, and Dohnanyi, 4/6 at 8. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (212-580-9933); $20, $13 for seniors and students.*

Consort Musick—Plays Italian and German Baroque masterpieces of Allegri, Bach, Buxtehude, and Scarlatti, 4/6 at 8. *Church of St. Jean Baptiste, 184 E. 76th St. (212-570-2130); $15–$20, $10 for seniors and students.*

New York Continuo Collective—Presents "Early Italian Songs and Dances," works by Caccini, Sances, Scacchi, and Marini, 4/6 at 1:15. *St. Francis of Assisi Church, 135 W. 31st St. (212-967-9157); free.*

New York Philharmonic—Performs Bach's *St. John Passion;* led by Kurt Masur, with a soloist performance by Heidi Grant Murphy, 4/6–4/8 at 8 and 4/11 at 7:30. *Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $26–$92.*

Helen Schneider—Sings the music of Kurt Weill and Stephen Sondheim in "A Walk on the Weill Side," 4/7 at 8. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (212-721-6500); $35.*

Boston Symphony Orchestra—Performs Berlioz, Dutilleux, and Rachmaninoff, 4/7 at 8. *New Jersey Performing Arts Center, 1 Center Street, Newark (888-466-5722); $15–$75.*

Keller Quartet—The Budapest-based group presents works by Mozart, Schubert, and Bartók, 4/7 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $36.*

Four Nations Ensemble and Music From China—Presents "Entertainment for Kings," a survey of French and Chinese court music, 4/8 at 8. *92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-966-1100); $25, $12.50 for students and seniors one hour before showtime.*

Nancy Wilson—Does what she does best—sing—as part of the Queens Black Cultural Arts Series, 4/8 at 8. *Colden Auditorium at Queens College, 65-30 Cassina Blvd., Flushing (718-793-8080); $24–$26.*

Boston Pops—In their only New York appearance of the season; program includes Williams, Hamilton and Lewis, Bernstein and Rogers, 4/8 at 8. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $21–$86.*

Great Performers—Highlights its Bach festival with two concerts. The first showcases Ton Koopman on organ, 4/8 at 8. The second features the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra and Choir, 4/9 at 4. *Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, 980 Park Ave., at 84th St. (212-721-6500); $30–$38.*

Tomoko Shibata—The soprano sings works by Mozart, Handel, Stravinsky, Bellini, Herbert, and Bernstein, 4/9 at 5:30. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (212-247-7800); $15–$30.*

Philip Glass—Performs his *Études for Solo Piano* and music from *Les Enfants Terribles*, 4/10 at 7. *Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, at 82nd St. (212-570-3949); $30.*

Opera

Dicapo—Performs Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, 4/7 and 4/8 at 8, 4/9 at 5. *Dicapo Opera, 184 E. 76th St. (212-288-9438); $33.*

Juilliard—Presents Kurt Weill's *Der Kuhhandel*, 4/11 at 8. *Juilliard Theater, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza (212-769-7406); $20.*

New York City Opera—*La Clemenza di Tito*, 4/4 and 4/6 at 7:30, 4/9 at 1:30; *Carmen*, 4/7 at 8; *The Mother of Us All*, 4/8 at 1:30; *Tosca*, 4/8 at 8; *Platée*, 4/11 at 7:30. *New York State Theater, Lincoln Center (212-870-5570); $22–$95.*

Dance

Burn the Floor—Departs radically from traditional ballroom repertoire, with 44 dancers juxtaposing standards like the tango with industrial dance, 4/5–4/6 at 8. *Radio City Music Hall, 1260 Sixth Ave., at 49th St. (212-307-4100); $35–$75.*

Jane Comfort and Co.—Performs works reflecting social, psychological, and political issues as part of "Afternoons at LIU," 4/5 at 12. *Triangle Theater, Dekalb and Flatbush Avenues, Brooklyn (718-488-1051); free.*

Scott Heron—Premieres his *The Water*, a meditation on urban and rural life, 4/6–4/9 at 8:30. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (212-477-5288); $15.*

Gabrielle Lansner—Revives *Crush*, his comic blend of dance-theater examining love and infatuation; the program also features the premiere of *Man Suit(e)*, 4/6–4/15 at 8 and 4/16 at 3. *HERE Arts Center, 145 Sixth Ave. (212-647-0202); $12–$15.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public outdoor performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."

Photograph by Michael Damas.

nightlife

Shelby Lynne...CSNY2K...No Doubt

Concerts

The Charlatans UK; Stereophonics—4/7 at 7:30. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171) $20.*

"CSNY2K"—An evening with Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. 4/9 at 8. *Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. (212-307-7171). $76, $51, $40.50.*

Korn—4/8 at 8. Even if they have much in common musically with their rap-rock peers like Kid Rock and Limp Bizkit, Korn stands out from that crowd with their ability to articulate a real sense of (teenage) alienation. *Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk., Uniondale (212-307-7171). $29.50.*

No Doubt—4/6 at 8. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). $25.*

Third Eye Blind—4/3 at 8. *Hammerstein Ballroom, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171). $26.50.*

Tina Turner—With Lionel Richie. 4/7–4/8 at 8. A perfect bill for the VH1 set, but short on excitement. Turner still ably performs old hits like "Proud Mary," but there's something cold and passionless about her act; beneath all the strutting, there's little soul. Richie, at least, doesn't try on any down-home poses—he seems entirely comfortable with his insignificance. *Madison Square Garden, 34th St. and 7th Ave. (212-307-7171). $45.25–$85.25.*

Tracy Chapman—4/4 at 8. The somber folkie returns with a new album called *Telling Stories. Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (212-307-7171). $30.*

Small Stages

Bottom Line—4/6: Reverend Tribble and the Angels. 4/7: David Johansen and the Harry Smiths. 4/8: "In Their Own Words" with Karla Bonhoff; Patti Larkin. *15 W. 4th St. (212-228-7880).*

Bowery Ballroom—4/5: Project Logic. 4/6: Dirty Three; Storm and Stress; Shannon Wright. 4/7-4/8: Luna. 4/10: Shelby Lynne. *6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111).*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—4/5: Filthy Rich & The Poor Boys.4/7: Bobby Bell. 4/8: Hiram Bullock. 4/9: Smoke Daddies. *73 Eighth Ave. (212-924-9755). $.*

Fez—Sundays: Jackie Beat's "I Didn't Mean to Turn You On." Thursdays: Mingus Big Band. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays: Kiki & Herb, "Playing for Time." 4/4: Sophia Ramos; Laura Wolf. 4/5: Lee Feldman. 4/7–4/8: Loser's Lounge Tribute to Carole King. 4/9: Lady Bunny: A Taste of Bunny. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (212-533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—4/6: The Rollins Band. 4/7-4/8: The Radiators; Merl Saunders and the Rainforest Band. 4/9: A bizarre identity change in the vein of Garth Brooks as Chris Gaines,' Backstreet Boy A.J. McLean performs covers of grunge classics as "Johnny No Name." *17 Irving Pl. (212-777-6800).*

Joe's Pub—An intimate space that boasts the most eclectic booking in town. Expect everything from torch singers to underground hip-hoppers to New Age composers. Mondays: Downtown revue "Damaged Liver Musical." Tuesdays: "Original Roses" with D.J. Beverly Bond. Wednesdays: "Reggae Night." Thursdays: Editors, scene-makers, and boldface names take their turns spinning their favorite records with the "Personality D.J. Series." Saturdays: Left-field, non–Hot 97–variety hip-hop with "Indie 5000." 4/3: Simi. 4/4–4/5: Virginia Rodrigues. *425 Lafayette St. (212-239-6200).*

Knitting Factory—4/3: Alan Silva with the Vision Orchestra. 4/4: Zeke; The Hookers; The Bulemics; Leftover Crack. 4/5: Tony Allen & Afrobeat 2000. 4/6: Elliott Sharp's Noodleshop. 4/7: Shipping News; Victory at Sea; Jukeboxer. 4/8: Elliott Sharp's Terraplane. 4/9: Turing Machine; Pedro the Lion; T.W. Walsh. 4/10: Rebirth Brass Band. *74 Leonard St. (212-219-3055). $*

Manitoba's—Mondays: Beat Rodeo. Saturdays: Adam Roth. Sundays: Anna. Tuesdays: "Hardcore" with hosts Misstress Formika and Candis Cayne. 4/5: The Martinettes; The Angry Inch Mob. 4/6: Patti Rothberg. 4/7: Vasquez. 4/9: The Bad Luck Charms. *99 Ave. B (212-982-2511).*

Maxwell's—4/6: Radio 4; Rainer Maria. 4/9: Marshall Crenshaw. *1039 Washington St., Hoboken, N.J. (201-653-1703).*

Mercury Lounge—4/3: Sea of Cortez; Damnations; Robbie Fulks. 4/5: Nickel Back; Un American; Flair. 4/6: "Desco Records Soul Revue" with Mighty Imperials; Sugarman Three; Soul Providers. 4/7: Ultimate Fake Book; Probe; The Getaway People. 4/8: The Blacks; Bad Livers; Demolition String Band. *217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700).*

Rodeo Bar—4/3: Western Caravan. 4/5: Chaz DePaolo. 4/6: Tom Russell. 4/7: Rogues March. 4/8: The Sprague Brothers. *375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (212-683-6500).*

S.O.B.'s—Most nights, sets at 10 and midnight. 3/29: Karen Bernod. 4/3: Combinación de la Habana; Ricardo Lemvo & Makina Loca. 4/4: Alex Bugnon. 4/6: Basement Bhangra. 4/7: Verdict; Baba Olatunji. 4/8: Vibe Brasilis; Karnival! 4/10: Jimmy Bosch. *204 Varick St. (212-243-4940).*

Wetlands—Mondays: D.J. Logic. Tuesdays: Illuminati. Thursdays: Groove Collective. 4/3: Immortal Satyricon. 4/4: Pork Tornado. 4/6: Dash Rip Rock. 4/7: Acoustic Junction. 4/8: The Maui Project. *161 Hudson St. (212-386-3600). $.*

Performance Saturnalia

No Doubt (pictured) got big making seventies ska-punk safe for the nineties, and their forthcoming 'Return of Saturn' makes eighties New Wave safe for the new millennium. But they're still fun, and singer Gwen Stefani should still be endearingly spastic April 6 at Roseland. (See "Concerts.")

Clubland

Alphabet Lounge—Saturdays: A great house-music party called "School," with resident D.J.'s Melvin Moore, Neil Aline (of "BPM" and "Rendez-Vous"), and producer Matthias Heilbronn. *104 Ave. C (212-780-0202).*

Baktun—A small, way-way-west venue that's host to some of the city's most relaxed, unpretentious club nights. Thursdays: A nifty trip-hop night called "Nice & Easy." Wednesdays: "Soons," an eclectic night of music with D.J.'s Jaymz Nylon and Gamall. Alternate Fridays: Loved-up house music from D.J.'s Holmar and A. Gram at "N'Ice"; the friendly, long-running house-music party "Bang the Party." Saturdays: "Direct Drive," a strictly drum 'n' bass night with D.J.'s Lion, Seoul, Cassien, Reid Speed, and Chris Thomas. Log on to www.baktun.com for complete schedule. *418 W. 14th St. (212-206-1590).*

Black Betty—A wondrously eclectic nightspot in Williamsburg. Wednesdays and Thursdays: "D.J.-O-Rama," D.J.'s spinning everything from hip-hop, dance-hall reggae, to funk. Sundays: "Jazz on Sundays." Mondays: "Rhythm on Mondays," anything with a groove, from Afro-Cuban jazz to sixties soul. *366 Metropolitan Ave., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-0243).*

Centro-Fly—The club formerly known as Tramp's is now a hot spot to groove to D.J.'s. The owners have managed to snag the house/trip-hop/big-beat promoters Plant for their Saturday nights and the "Subliminal Sessions" with D.J. Erick Morillo (and plenty of D.J. royalty like Armand Van Helden and "Little" Louie Vega as their special guests) for their Thursdays. The last Saturday of every month, Plant presents D.J.'s Junior Sanchez and Roger Sanchez (no relation), two of New York house music's finest. Sundays: Dressed-up hip-hop with "VIP Sundays" featuring D.J. Max Glazer and Jessica Rosenblum. *45 W. 21st St. (212-803-7859).*

Photograph by Chris Cuffaro.

Cheetah—This Chelsea/Flatiron district nightspot has suddenly become a great dance-music destination thanks to "Twelve West," "Underground Network," and "Legends." Tuesdays: "Twelve West," D.J. Nicky Siano's wildly fun, campy after-work party where Chelsea boys, fierce voguers, and men in Superman costumes (!) get their groove on for an early-week romp that rivals the ecstatic energy of "Body & Soul." Wednesdays: "Underground Network" returns. Thursdays: Soulful house provided by D.J. Adam Scott at "Legends." *12 W. 21st St. (212-206-7770).*

Don Hill's—South and west enough to scare away the rabble, this inconspicuous bar hosts rockers, club kids, and vinyl gourmets—all of whom groove to some of the best D.J.'s in the city. Wednesdays: "Rock Candy" with D.J. and host Steven Blush. Thursdays: "BeavHer," a long-running eighties night; Fridays: Drag queens and gay rock 'n' rollers get down at "Squeezebox." Saturdays: British rock–themed "Tiswas." Sundays: D.J. Johnny Sender spins an eclectic mix of soul, funk, rock, R&B, salsa, and house at "Loose." *511 Greenwich St. (212-219-2850). $.*

Flamingo—This East Village nightspot was once called Flamingo East. The club now has a hipper, more futuristic bent thanks to parties like Saturday's techno-dominated "Tru Skul." 4/8: D.J.'s Heckle & Jeckle. *219 Second Ave. (212-533-2860).*

Izzy Bar—Like Orchard Bar, Izzy Bar is less a watering hole than a place to chill out and hear some cutting-edge tunes. Tuesdays: Neil Aline, host of NYU's ultrahip "BPM" radio show, hosts "Rendez-vous," a strictly no-D.J.'s party where media folk, artists, and others take their shot on the wheels of steel. Thursdays: Big-name D.J.'s like Todd Terry and Frankie Feliciano drop by for "Assorted Flavors." Saturdays: Things get funky with the hip-hop-and-soul-dominated "Say It Loud." *166 First Ave. (212-228-0444). $.*

The Roxy—The cavernous Chelsea institution's deeply entertaining and mysteriously underattended Tuesday- and Wednesday-night roller-skating jam keeps boogie queens' wheels spinning till the wee hours. Fridays: "Big Fridays" offer big fun for the weekender straight crowd. Saturdays: Superstar D.J. Victor Calderone spins house for the Chelsea boys while hard-bodied go-go boys dance on the bar. 4/6: Miles Ahead presents Goldie; Doc Scott. *515 W. 18th St. (212-627-0404). $.*

Shine—Once an important spot for up-and-coming rock and dance acts, this downtown spot is now host to excellent, enthusiastically received D.J.-oriented nights like "Giant Step Mondays" and the Friday night hip-hop-meets-beautiful-people affair "Hello 2000." 4/3: "Compost Recordings Night" with D.J.'s Fauna Flash, Rainer Truby, Ron Trent. *285 W. Broadway (212-941-0900).*

Twilo—Twilo is the superclub of the moment, thanks to a revolving lineup of dance music's biggest marquee attractions. Wednesdays: The upstairs lounge hosts hard house and techno with "2K Wednesdays." Fridays: World-class D.J.'s like Carl Cox, Sasha and Digweed, and Cassius play for a mixed crowd of drag divas and on-the-prowl straights. Saturdays: Aging club king D.J. Junior Vasquez spins for his bare-chested Chelsea-boy following. 4/5: Claude Young; Damon Wild; Ulysses. 4/7: "Ultimate B.A.S.E" with Oliver Lieb; D.J. Dan; Jim Masters. *530 W. 27th St. (212-268-1600).*

Vinyl—Stripped of its liquor license, this once-hedonistic downtown space is now a dance-music purist's paradise and quite possibly the best club in the city. Wednesdays: "Little" Louie Vega spins at the relaxed, low-key (for now), dance-friendly (check out the break-dancers in the back of the room) house party "Dance Ritual." Fridays: Hard, trippy house (affectionately nicknamed "K-hole house" by its aficionados) from D.J. Danny Tenaglia. Saturdays: Timmy Regisford's fantastic house-music party "Shelter," which at about seven in the morning becomes the city's most adventurous party as Regisford bangs out everything from the Afro-beat of Fela Kuti to the ambient, pillow-soft house of Mr. Fingers. Sundays: François K, Joe Claussell, and Danny Krivit spin at the now legendary afternoon party "Body & Soul." Arrive early or you'll face a devastatingly long line at the door. Monthly: Renowned Japanese trance D.J. Tsuyoshi Suzuki. *6 Hubert St. (212-343-1379).*

The Warehouse—Manhattan-centric clubbers have been eating their bridge-and-tunnel-dissing crow thanks to this house-music paradise located in, of all places, the Bronx. Saturdays are the night to head up to the Warehouse and check out D.J.'s like T-Pro and Andre Collins. Could this be the beginning of an outer-borough clubland renaissance? *141 W. 140th St. (718-992-5974).*

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Performance

Shelby Has Left the Building

Any country-leaning album with a name like *I Am Shelby Lynne* must either be a new Garth Brooks side project or a brash declaration of purpose. In Shelby Lynne's case, it's the latter, a chance to go her own way after five Nashville-by-numbers releases and some songwritin' 'n' soul-searchin' time in her native Alabama. But Lynne (pictured), who will perform April 10 at the Bowery Ballroom, isn't just another y'allternative refugee from the country-music machine—her soulful songs reach back to a cross-Tennessee tradition that started when the King himself recorded *From Elvis in Memphis.* Naturally, she's a faithful subject. "I'm the true Elvis fan—I like the seventies stuff," she says. "He was still beautiful when he was fat—he just went with it. I hope when I'm fat, people dig me." Other influences include Willie Nelson's quiet introspection and Phil Spector's "wall of sound," especially on the richly textured opener, "Your Lies." Lynne's life could have been clipped from a country lyric—her father shot her mother and then himself when she was just 18. But her recent behavior owes more to rock stardom: She favors leather pants over denim jeans, prefers Palm Springs to the South, and once got escorted off a plane. "The guy behind me didn't believe I was a singer," she protests, "so I sang a song. But I've been behavin' myself just fine." Given her insistence on doing things her own way, has that become part of the Shelby Lynne legend? "Legend?" she says, incredulous. "That's crazy talk." Then she pauses. "Maybe a legacy."

Robert Levine

Photograph by Rankin.

Jazz

Birdland—Proof that jazz is alive and well in midtown, this classy boîte serves up some fine southern cuisine along with its first-rate lineup. Sundays: Chico O'Farrill Afro-Cuban Jazz Big Band. Mondays: Toshiko Akiyoshi Jazz Orchestra. Tuesdays: The Famous Duke Ellington Orchestra directed by Paul Ellington. 4/5: Charlie Crachy & Liz Gorrill Quartet; Connie Crothers & Richard Tabnik. 4/6: Rumba Club. 4/7–4/8: Bucky Pizzarelli & New York Swing. 4/9: Cubarama. *315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080).*

Blue Note—With a great sound system and a decent view from every seat in the house, the "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening. Sets at 9 and 11:30. 4/4–4/9: Afro-Cuban pianist Chucho Valdes & His Band. *131 W. 3rd St. (212-475-8592).*

City Hall—Mondays in the Granite Room: The Charles Mingus Orchestra. $15 cover, $10 for students. *131 Duane St. (212-227-7777).*

Deanna's—This Lower East Side jazz haunt run by singer Deanna Kirk should give Tonic a run for its money. The venue is open Tuesday through Sunday. Kirk performs on most nights. *107 Rivington St. (212-420-2258).*

Detour—With no cover and top-notch young players, this Village joint packs 'em in every night of the week. Sundays: Mike Magilligan. *349 E. 13th St. (212-533-6212).*

"Highlights in Jazz Presents: An Evening of Early Jazz"—With Dicky Hyman; Carrie Smith; David Ostwald's Gully Low Jazz Band featuring Wycliffe Gordon, Randy Sandke, Herlin Riley, and Frank Vignola. 4/6 at 8. *The Pace Downtown Theater, 3 Spruce St. (212-346-1715). $20, $17.50 for students.*

Iridium—In the surreal basement across from Lincoln Center, you'll find formidable jazz comers and the occasional legend. Thoughtful table placement minimizes a couple of structural columns' potentially disastrous effects on sight lines. Monday nights, the Les Paul Trio holds office hours. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. 4/4–4/9: Mark Whitfield Quintet. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (212-582-2121).*

Jazz at Lincoln Center: "Moody's Moods—James Moody's 75th Birthday Bash"—With Jimmy Heath, Jackie McLean, Annie Ross, Jon Hendricks, Slide Hampton, Kenny Barron, Paquito D'Rivera, and Jon Faddis. 4/3 at 8. *Avery Fisher Hall, Columbus Ave. and 64th St. (212-721-6500). $50, $45, $40, $35, $30, $20*

Performance

Déjà Vu All Over Again

You thought you'd seen the last of both Y2K puns and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, but the band's "CSNY2K Tour" will hit Continental Airlines Arena April 9. Expect to hear folk-inspired hits like "Carry On" and "Teach Your Children" as well as material from their new album, millennial-ly titled 'Looking Forward.' (See "Concerts.")

"Jazz Insights: The Vocalists"—Informal lectures hosted by Arnold Jay Smith. Tuesdays, 7:45–9:30. 4/4: Helen Merrill. *The New School, 66 W. 12th St. (212-229-5873). $25.*

The Jazz Standard—A sprawling room with terrific sound and the best club menu in the city, the Jazz Standard offers a fresh mix of estimable hard-boppers, jazz greats, and artists on the rise. Mon., Tues., and Fri. at 5:30 and Sat. at 7, guitarist David O'Rourke swings in the upstairs 27 Standard bar. Sets Wed.–Thurs. at 8 and 10, Fri. and Sat. at 8, 10:30, and midnight, Sun. at 7 and 9. 4/4–4/9: "Greg Osby Blue Note Release Week." $15–$25 cover; $10 minimum. *116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232).*

Museum of Modern Art—Fridays, in addition to throwing its doors open for pay-what-you-wish night, MOMA also transforms its cafeteria into a (sort of) swinging jazz club. All shows at 5:30. The museum's Sette restaurant offers jazz Thursdays and Saturdays, 6–10. *11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-0480).*

Small's—Extremely cozy and open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (212-929-7565). $.*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Saturday, jazz brunch with Ilhan Ersahin. Sundays, Chuck Folds hosts "the original jazz brunch." Every Monday, it's the Spirit of Life Ensemble. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. 4/4–4/8: Kenny Barron and Brazilia. *88 Seventh Ave. So. (212-242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern now offers the occasional pianist in its "Crystal Room." Like a trip to Vegas—without the airfare! Four-hour sets begin at 6:30 weeknights, at 7 on weekends. Pianists Scott Gordon, Michael Ferreri, Rich Siegel, Paul Katz, and Michael Favata entertain diners weekdays. No cover; no minimum. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (212-873-3200).*

Tonic—Yet another impeccably hip Lower East Side avant-jazzerie, Tonic has its sights set on the Knitting Factory crowd. Sunday: Klezmer Sundays. 4/4: William Connell. 4/5: Voice Crack and Borbetomagus. 4/7: Sarah Jane Morris. *107 Norfolk St. (212-358-7503). $.*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30, with a late 1 A.M. set Fri. and Sat. 4/4–4/9: Stanley Turrentine. *178 Seventh Ave. So. (212-255-4037). $.*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Tues.–Thurs., shows at 9:30; Fri.–Sat., shows at 8, 10, and midnight. Jim Norton, DC Benny, Jim Gaffigan, Robert Kelly, Jordan Rubin, Nick Swardson & Macio. *82 W. 3rd St. (212-477-1000).*

Carolines on Broadway—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show, Carolines hosts big names and talented up-and-comers in its wide, elegant, TV-studio-like basement. Mondays, "New Talent Night," hosted by Eddie Brill. 4/4: "The Blue Collar Show." 4/5: "Chicks with Schticks;" Royale Watkins. 4/6–4/9: Mario Cantone; Sheryl Underwood. 4/8–4/9: Stand-Up Experience. $12.50–$24.50, two-drink minimum. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (212-757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11; Sat. at 9, 10:45, and 12:30; and Sun.–Thurs. at 9. Through 4/9: Colin Quinn; Greer Barnes; Mitch Fatel; Modi; Godfrey. *117 Macdougal St. (212-254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (212-861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Shows Fri. at 9 and 11:15; Sat. at 8, 10:30, and 12:30 A.M.; Sun.–Thurs., continuous from 8:45. Cover is $15 Fri. and Sat. ($20 for 10:30 Sat. show), $12.50 on weeknights; no minimum. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (212-593-1650).*

Gotham—A trendy comedy spot in the Flatiron district. Every Tues. and Sun.: New Talent Showcase. Sun.–Thurs. at 8:30; Fri. and Sat. at 8:30 and 10:30. Cover is $12 Fri. and Sat., $8 on weeknights. Two-drink minimum. 4/5: "An Evening With Robert Klein." 4/7–4/8: Louis Ramey; Greg Giraldo; David J. Nash. *34 W. 22nd St. (212-367-9000).*

"Spin Cycle Comedy"—Comedy from Danny Cohen and Jodie Wasserman while you separate your whites and colors. Really. *King Size Laundromat, 178 Seventh Ave., at 20th St. (212-501-6016). Free.*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. Cover is $7–$12. Shows: Sun.–Thurs. at 7 and 9; Fri. at 7, 9, and 11:30. Sat. at 8, 10, and 12. *236 W. 78th St. (212-595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Fresh from a major overhaul, the Oak Room hosts some formidable names in its cozy environs. (Early shows Tues.–Sat., late shows Fri. & Sat.) Sundays: The Howard Fishman Quartet. 4/4–4/21: Karen Akers makes her Algonquin debut. *59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800).*

Arci's Place—A Murray Hill–area Italian restaurant with an intimate cabaret space. 4/4–4/29: Robert Cuccioli. *450 Park Ave. So. at 30th St. (212-532-4370).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics, with an emphasis on opera and operetta, are the keynote of this Village landmark. Late dining. *13 E. 12th St. (212-741-9105).*

Cafe Carlyle—Every Monday, Woody Allen swings through the early set with Eddy Davis & His New Orleans Jazz Band at 8:45. $60. Bobby Short plays two shows nightly (Tuesday-Saturday) at 8:45 and 10:45. $60. Through 5/6: Pianist Peter Mintun performs Tuesday through Saturday, from 9:30P.M. to 1:30A.M. $10. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600).*

The Carnegie Club at Carnegie Bar and Books—Fridays and Saturdays at 9:30 and 11:00: Sinatra impersonator Cary Hoffman, backed by Stan Rubin's 11-piece big band. $20 cover; two-drink minimum. *156 W. 56th St.*

Don't Tell Mama—What better way to wind down after an evening of overwrought Broadway fare than some understated cabaret? *343 W. 46th St. (212-757-0788). $.*

Feinstein's at the Regency—Michael Feinstein's cabaret space at the Regency Hotel shares the room with the restaurant 540 Park. Tickets are $60 and there is a $50 food and drink minimum. 3/28–4/22: Michael Feinstein. 4/6–4/8: Rita Rudner. *540 Park Ave, at 61st St. (212-307-4100 or 212-339-4095).*

FireBird Café—The theater district's newest post-show snuggery, right next door to an overwrought Russian restaurant—steer clear of the Cossack-dagger-toting doormen and you'll be fine. Wed.–Thurs., sets at 9. Fri. and Sat., sets at 9 and 11. $30 cover; $20 minimum. Wed.–Fri. through 4/8: Jeff Harnar and Shauna Hicks in "Shauna & Jeff Sing Mickey & Judy." *365 W. 46th St. (212-586-0244).*

Judy's—This cozy and friendly piano bar features two performance spaces, a fine menu, and a weekly gig by Judy herself. 4/3: Richard Cramer. 4/4–4/5: Lynne Charnay in "Let's Bring Back Love." 4/6: Amy Schmidt and Mitch Ellis in "Together Again for the First Time." 4/7: Judy Niemack. 4/8: Judy Kreston and David Lahm in "Keep It in the Family." 4/9: Nora Michaels in "Tout Moi." 4/10: Richard Cramer in "A Legend in His Spare Time." *169 Eighth Ave., bet. 18th and 19th Sts. (212-929-5410).*

Photograph by Henry Diltz.

the mix

"Before Stonewall"...Cornelius Eady...Mark Green

John Leonard's TV Notes

On the Ropes (4/4; 9 to 11 P.M.; TLC) is the Oscar-nominated, 1999 Sundance Jury Prize–winning documentary on three prizefighters, one of them female, for whom the boxing ring is the only way out of Bed-Stuy, and the trainer at a Brooklyn club who helps them negotiate their way to the Golden Gloves and maybe beyond. Every bit as good as *Hoop Dreams*.

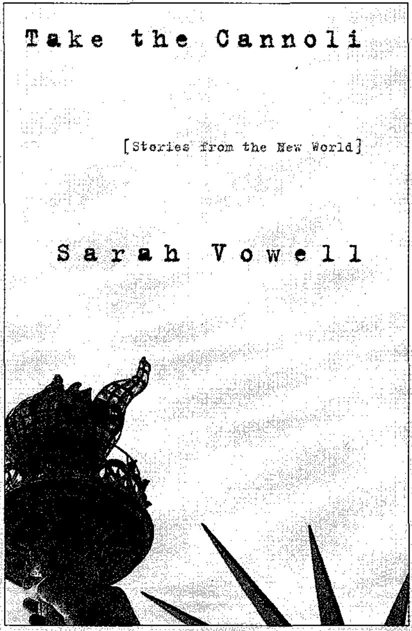
Faces of Evil (4/6; 10 to 11:30 P.M.; TNT), narrated by Malcolm McDowell and featuring film clips and interviews (with a criminal psychologist, a female rabbi, an exorcist, a Navajo medicine man, a horror-film director, and even a bump-on-the-head phrenologist), purports to explore the problem of evil in the world—why does it exist and why are we so fascinated?—and may very well be, even when it's quoting Thomas Hardy and Wallace Stevens, the biggest load of claptrap ever to show up on non-Fox television. Personally, I blame the designated hitter in American League baseball.

Life of Python (4/9; 8 to 10 P.M.; A&E) is both a moderately amusing send-up of A&E's "Biography" series and depressing self-indulgence on the part of everybody who made the original British series so improbably splendid. Eric Idle is our host. John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, and Michael Palin are, of course, introduced. Sir David Frost pontificates. Robin Williams, Kevin Kline, and Meat Loaf are interviewed. There are snippets from, for instance, "The Spam Song," "Sit on My Face," and "Every Sperm Is Sacred." And there's even a family tree. But except for the inspired sarcasm of Eddie Izzard, who is Python's privileged child, we are merely reminded of how funny they all used to be once upon a time, before they went branding.

In Print
Wanna Buy a Vowell?

Sarah Vowell needs at least three hands to weigh the merits of the two media she uses to tell stories. "On the one hand, it's easier and more effective to be sarcastic out loud, because I can just twirl my voice around," says Vowell, a columnist for *Salon* and commentator for public radio's "This American Life." "On the other hand, it's more understandable for audiences when you have names and dates and places on the page where they can spend time and pause. But on the other hand, in some ways there's no difference: My whole goal on the page is to be conversational and capture my speaking voice." Vowell's book of essays, *Take the Cannoli*, is a collection of new work and pieces she first wrote for the radio, which range from a contemplation of her gun-loving dad ("About the only thing my father and I agree on is the Constitution, though I'm partial to the First Amendment, while he's always favored the Second") to her experience as an undercover goth. "I like doing straight reporting about other people's stories and lives, but for some weird reason people always seem to like the stories about me and my family so much better," she says. "Part of that is just geography, because we had this curious life in the middle of Montana, and people like these Americana stories told in not an entirely folksy, hokey fashion." One fan called her a "well-read hick," but his assessment amused her more than the New York *Times*: "We do serious stories, and they called us *oddballs and others*," she fumes. "It's like, 'Oh, those *wacky* Holocaust survivors!' Also, I'm always wondering which one I am . . . although I suspect I already know." Vowell will be reading and talking with David Sedaris and Ira Glass at Town Hall (123 West 43rd Street; 212-840-2824) on April 18 at 8 P.M.

ARIEL LEVY



Lectures and Panels

"Alexander Calder: Artistic Development and Authenticity"—4/4 at 6 P.M.: A talk by Alexander S.C. Rower, director of the Alexander and Louisa Calder Foundation. National Academy of Design, 5 E. 89th St. (212-391-6234); $25, reservations required.

"In Conversation: Jacques Barzun"—4/4 at 6 P.M.: Historian Barzun talks about his new book, *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, 1500 to the Present*, with Arthur Schlesinger Jr. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St. (212-873-3400); free, reservations required.

"Bellini and the Production of Devotional Paintings"—4/5 at 5:30 P.M.: A lecture by Keith Christiansen of the Metropolitan Museum of Art examining the range of Bellini's achievement as a painter of devotional imagery. The Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700); free.

"International Express: Ethnic Communities along the IRT No. 7 Train"—4/5 at 6:30 P.M.: A screening and lecture on Ilana Harlow's film. The Flushing Branch of the Queens Public Library, 41-17 Main St., Queens. (718-243-8601); free.

"Reports From the Front Lines of the Art and Cultural Property Wars"—4/6, 10 A.M.–5:30 P.M.: An all-day conference with a luncheon keynote and three panels featuring artists, gallery dealers, museum directors, and legal scholars who will discuss art censorship, repatriation of cultural property, and the future of art law. Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, 55 Fifth Ave. (212-790-0292); $70, including lunch.

"Internet Design Firm 2001"—4/6 at 6 P.M.: Leaders from the industry talk about how changes such as consolidations, broadband, handheld content, and more measurement have affected Internet design firms. Parsons School of Design's Tishman Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. (212-647-8693); $15, reservations required online at www.alleyevent.com or at the door.

"Now and Again"—4/6 at 7 P.M.: A screening of an upcoming episode of the CBS series about an Everyman resurrected as a bionic superman, followed by a discussion with its creator Glenn Gordon Caron and members of the cast and creative team. The Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (212-621-6600); $10.

"92nd Street Y Women's Health Symposium"—4/9, 9:30 A.M.–4:30 P.M.: A conference featuring lectures by Dr. Judith Reichman, author and *Today Show* medical correspondent, at 9:30 A.M., and Dr. Susan J. Blumenthal, U.S. Assistant Surgeon General, at 3:30 P.M., with seminars, free health screenings, and health exhibits continuing throughout the day. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20 for each lecture or $50 for full-day package including seminars.

"Roger Rosenblatt & Friends: Conversations at the Turn of the Century"—4/9 at 7:30 P.M.: Rosenblatt is joined by actor and author George Plimpton, author Russell Banks, and U.S. Poet Laureate Rita Dove to discuss literature in the age of the Internet. 92nd Street Y, 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100); $20.

"La Vida Loca: The Life of the Artist in Cuba"—4/10 at 7 P.M.: An illustrated slide lecture on the art and culture of Castro's Cuba by art commentator Edward Rubin, based upon a trip that included visits to contemporary Cuban artists. The Cooper Union's Wollman Auditorium, 51 Astor Place. (212-353-4195); free.

GAME WEEK

HOME ● AWAY ●

	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN
KNICKS				WAS MSG 7:30 P.M.	ORL MSG 8 P.M.		MIA NBC 5:30 P.M.
NETS		WAS FSNY 7 P.M.	IND METRO 8 P.M.		MIA METRO 7:30 P.M.	MIL NO TV 8:30 P.M.	
DEVILS	FLA FSNY 7:30 P.M.			BUF METRO 7:30 P.M.		FLA FSNY 1 P.M.	
ISLANDERS				OTT NY55 7 P.M.	TOR NY55 7:30 P.M.		FLA FSNY NOON
RANGERS	WAS MSG 7:30 P.M.		MON NY55 7:30 P.M.				PHI ABC 3 P.M.
METROSTARS						SJ MSG 10 P.M.	
METS	SD WPIX 1:10 P.M.		SD FSNY 7:10 P.M.	SD FSNY 7:10 P.M.	LA FSNY 7:10 P.M.	LA WPIX 1:10 P.M.	LA WPIX 1:10 P.M.
YANKEES	ANA FOX 10:35 P.M.	ANA FOX 10:05 P.M.	ANA MSG 10:05 P.M.		SEA FOX 10:05 P.M.	SEA MSG 4:05 P.M.	SEA FOX 4:35 P.M.
	4/3	4/4	4/5	4/6	4/7	4/8	4/9

The Written Word

Bill Bryson—4/4 at 6 P.M.: Reading from his books *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering the Appalachian Trail* and *I'm a Stranger Here Myself: Notes on Returning to America After Twenty Years,* as part of the "Writing the American Landscape" series. The Celeste Bartos Forum of the New York Public Library's Humanities and Social Sciences Library, Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (212-930-0855); $10.

Nicholas Christopher—4/4 at 7 P.M.: Reading from his book *A Trip to the Stars* at the Lenox Hill Bookstore, 1018 Lexington Ave., at 73rd St. (212-472-7170); free.

"Food and Memoir"—4/5 at 6 P.M.: An examination of food and literature featuring Betsy Fussell, author of *My Kitchen Wars, New York Times* food writer Amanda Hesser, and restaurateur George Lang at the Reading Room of the Mercantile Library, 17 E. 47th St. (212-755-6710); $5 for adults, free for seniors and students, reservations required.

"You'd Be Surprised"—4/5 at 6:30 P.M.: Readings from Saki's *Toys of Peace,* Kiana Davenports's *War Doll Hotel,* and Richard Bausch's *Valor,* read by Dana Ivey, Maria Tucci, and William Hurt as part of the "Selected Shorts" series at Symphony Space, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400); $18 for adults, $15 for students and seniors.

Terry Pratchett—4/5 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from his latest book, *The Fifth Elephant,* at Barnes & Noble Astor Place, 4 Astor Place. (212-420-0816); free.

Akilah Oliver and Bill Bissett—4/5 at 8 P.M.: Reading from their latest works, *the she said dialogues: flesh memory* and *skars on the seehors,* respectively, at the Poetry Project, St. Mark's Church, 131 E. 10th St. (212-674-0910); $7 adults, $4 students and seniors.

Bob Costas—4/6 at 7 P.M.: Reading from his new book, *Fair Ball: A Fan's Case for Baseball,* at Barnes & Noble, 1972 Broadway, at 66th St. (212-595-6859); free.

Colum McCann—4/6 at 7 P.M.: Reading from his latest work, *Everything in this Country Must,* at New York University's Glucksman Ireland House, 1 Washington Mews, at Fifth Ave. (212-998-3950); $5.

Jody Shield—4/7 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from her latest work, *The Fig Eater,* at Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (212-362-8835); free.

Mark Green—4/8 at 2 P.M.: Reading from his book *Mark Green's Guide to Coping in New York City* at Barnes & Noble, 267 Seventh Ave., at 6th St., Park Slope, Brooklyn. (718-832-9074); free.

Marilyn Hacker, Yvette Christianse, and Barry Wallenstein—4/9 at 3 P.M.: Reading from their works of poetry at Posman Books, 1 University Place. (212-533-2665); free.

Molly McQuade, Mark Wunderlich, David Trinidad, and Cornelius Eady—4/9 at 3 P.M.: Reading from their works of poetry at the Civic Center Synagogue, 49 White St. (718-789-5682); $7 adults, $5 students and seniors.

"Fathers and Sons"—4/9 at 7:30 P.M.: Steven Varni and Michael Skakun read from their works *The Inland Sea* and *On Burning Ground: A Son's Memoir,* respectively, at Temple Bar, 332 Lafayette St. (212-925-4242); free.

Robert Bly and Molly Peacock—4/10 at 7:30 P.M.: Reading from their poetry at KGB, 85 E. 4th St. (212-505-3360); free.

Rachel Kranz—4/10 at 7:30 P.M.: The artistic director of the Theater of Necessity reads from her novel *Leaps of Faith,* along with actors Rocco Sisto, Jan Leslie Harding, Ellen Madow, and Caroline Clay. La Belle Epoque, 827 Broadway (212-969-0412); free.

Tours

Meat Packing District—4/8 at 11:30 A.M.: A walking tour of the Far West Fourteenth Street district, which has become an upscale neighborhood of galleries, food markets, clothing stores, restaurants, and pubs. Meet at the northeast corner of 14th St. and Ninth Ave. (212-265-2663); $5.

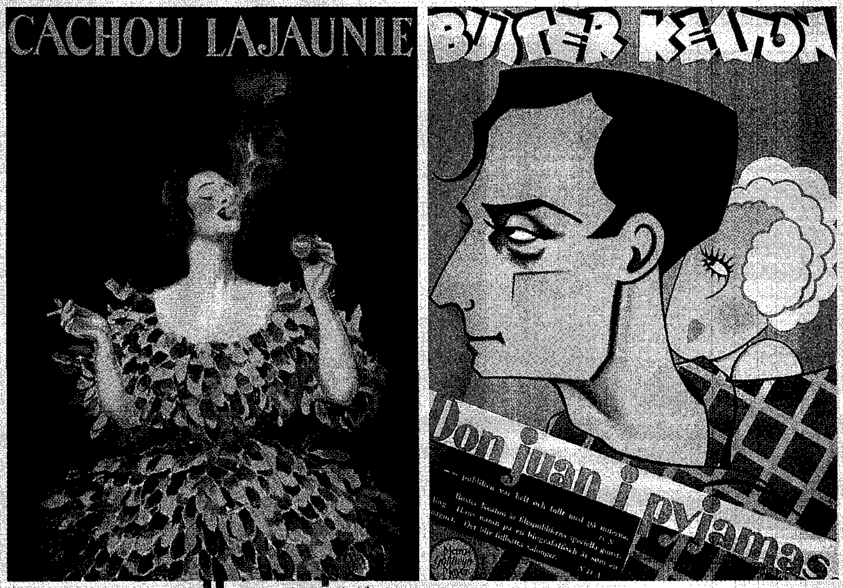
"Before Stonewall: A Gay & Lesbian History Tour"—4/8 at 1 P.M.: Discover the many facets of lesbian and gay history through stops associated with Bayard Rustin, Willa Cather, and New York's cross-dressing politicians, tracing the development of Greenwich Village as a community mecca. Meet at the Washington Square Arch. (212-439-1090); $10 adults, $8 students and seniors.

Radical Lower East Side Walking Tour—4/8 at 1 P.M.: Featuring stops related to Abraham Cahan, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Sidney Hillman, Rose Pastor Stokes, the Henry Street Settlement, prostitution, and Seward Park High School. Meet opposite the old *Jewish Daily Forward* building at 175 E. Broadway. (718-492-0069); $10.

Benefits

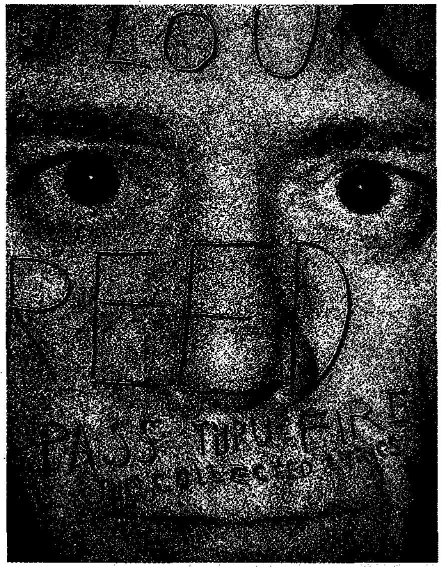
Show & Tell—4/5 at 7 P.M.: An evening of song and scenes with Stephen Sondheim, Wendy Wasserstein, Lynn Ahrens, and Stephen Flaherty, Murray Horowitz, David Henry Hwang, Kenneth Lonergan, and John Weidman, featuring performances by Nathan Lane and Paul Rudd, to benefit Sondheim's Young Playwrights Inc. Laura Belle, 120 W. 44th St. (212-353-8355); $175 for cocktails, hors d'oeuvre, and entertainment, $500 for additional after-performance dinner with the artists.

Riverkeeper Annual Benefit—4/6 at 7 P.M.: Cocktails, dinner, and a performance by the Bacon Brothers to honor Rick Fersch and Arthur Ross, benefiting the organization's efforts to clean up the Hudson River. Pier Sixty at Chelsea Piers, 23rd St. and the Hudson River. (212-245-6570, ext. 20); individual tickets $500, $1,000, and $2,500, tables are $10,000, $15,000, and $25,000.



Happening
Art of the Deal

Part art, part ad, the promo posters of yesteryear certainly had a bit more flair—not to mention logic—than Armani Exchange's "I need you." What's more, they were often created by the likes of Toulouse-Lautrec, Chagall, and other artists whose work you probably wouldn't mind seeing on your walls. Snag a ravishing relic, or a reprinted likeness thereof, at the International Vintage Poster Fair from April 7 to 9 at the Metropolitan Pavilion. See "Events" for details.



Happening **We've always suspected that Lou Reed's status as eternally cool rock icon has more to do with his brilliant words than with his Frankensteinish good looks. Now the publication of *Pass Thru Fire,* his collected lyrics, confirms it. Finally, fans will be able to learn every word to *Heroin.* Run, run, run down to Union Square Barnes & Noble for Reed's reading on April 4 at 7:30 P.M.**

Events

A New Yorker's Indoor Garden Show—4/4–4/6, 11 A.M.–7 P.M.: A wonderland of flowering plants, varied foliage, and exotic tropicals, with displays by major New York–based plant societies and botanic gardens. Citicorp Center's Atrium, 153 E. 53rd St., 128 W. 58th St. (212-226-8903); free.

Writing Across Borders: U.S. International Women Writers Conference—4/5, 9 A.M.–5:30 P.M.: Readings and discussions by Marilyn French, Tillie Olsen, Grace Paley, and others about women's contributions to literature. The City of New York's Graduate Center, Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium, Concourse Level, 365 Fifth Ave., at 34th St. (212-817-8215); free, reservations required.

23rd International Vintage Poster Fair—4/7, 5–9 P.M.; 4/8, 10 A.M.–7 P.M.; 4/9, 10 A.M.–5 P.M.: The largest gathering of vintage poster dealers from New York and Europe, featuring panel discussions on 4/8. Metropolitan Pavilion, 125 W. 18th St. (212-246-5900); $30 for entire event, $12 per day or $20 for 4/8–4/9.

Sports

Opening Day—4/3: Last week while we were sleeping, suddenly it was spring and baseball season started in Japan. Most will insist Monday is still Opening Day; some call it five months before football season; dreamers might tag it as the starting point for the Subway Series countdown. Surely, though, it's a sign that hot dogs are back in fashion. Padres at Mets, 1:10 P.M., WPIX; Yankees at Angels, 10:35 P.M., Fox.

Empire Tuesday Night Skate—4/4 at 8 P.M.: The Empire Skate Club's weekly in-line skate starts at Krispy Kreme, 141 W. 72nd St., finishing around 11 P.M. Distance covered and route vary—anywhere from 10 to 25 miles. Pace is brisk; suitable for intermediate to advanced bladers. Contact the Empire Skate Club of New York at 212-774-1774 or visit www.empireskate.org for more information.

Gardner *continued from page 57*

ner of the Halstead Property Company. "So condos suit them fine."

The neighborhood is attracting a new kind of "artist"—and one far better compensated than the average paint-stained wretch who inhabited the neighborhood in the old days. Billy Crystal and Martha Stewart's daughter Alexis have bought in the Ice House, a renovated luxury condo overlooking a not especially scenic traffic island on Ericsson Place. David Bowie and his wife, Iman; poor Eric Nederlander, who will probably forever be known as the husband Jessica Sklar left for Jerry Seinfeld; and Lachlan Murdoch purchased at 285 Lafayette Street, a former artist-loft building.

Others making the trek downtown include Lachlan's dad, Rupert, living *la vida loca* with his third wife, Wendy Deng, in the duplex penthouse at 141 Prince Street. Mariah Carey, smarting on the heels of a turndown when she tried to purchase Barbra Streisand's apartment at 320 Central Park West—she showed up with bodyguards (not the sort of touch that goes over big at a *haimish* building like the Ardsley) and an exposed navel after she was warned to dress like she was on her way to a funeral—is buying two floors at the Franklin Tower, an Art Deco beauty in TriBeCa where Ben Stiller will be a neighbor.

"She was refreshed by the freedom of condominium purchase" is how one broker who helped show the diva around 140 Franklin, another building she was considering, put it. At the moment, 140 Franklin boasts TriBeCa's most expensive condo, an $11 million penthouse with 29 mahogany-framed windows, eleven-foot ceilings, and a living room whose 200-by-50-foot dimensions would be suitable for just about anything from celebrating your dot-com's IPO with your worldwide staff and all your investors to Little League play.

"She arrives with a driver, two bodyguards, a business manager, an attorney, two brokers, and they all had cell phones," sniffs one broker. "She was on her cell phone the whole time. She never looked at the apartment."

In the diva's defense, there still isn't much to look at unless your taste runs to distressed brick, bare light bulbs, and exposed wiring. She's paying around $9 million and hiring Mario Buatta to decorate it.

By the way, when the building opens for business in the near future, don't expect to see doorman Anthony Perricone in an uptown monkey suit with gold braid and epaulets. "We're not going to be in a uniform like you can tell we're a doorman," he explains. "The people who live in this building don't want that flash." ■

Solutions to last week's puzzles

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Children's Events

Ground Rules:

● = free

● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Environmentally Correct—Folksinger Tom Chapin brings his earthly message to kids in a concert at 11 A.M. and 2 P.M. on 4/8 at **SYMPHONY SPACE**, 2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (212-864-5400). Tickets are $8. Both concerts are followed by special Earth Day programs at the **CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF MANHATTAN**, 212 W. 83 St. (212-721-1234).●

Don't Forget Your Bloomers—If your little urbanite doesn't know that a bulb can be more than a source of light, then a trip to **THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN** is in order. In the Early Bloomers exhibit at the Everett Children's Adventure Garden, kids go hands-on to explore bulbs and how they grow. Through 4/23. The Garden Passport includes both general admission and the Everett exhibit: $10 for adults, $7.50 for seniors and students, $4 for kids 2-12. 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd. (718-817-8700).

Mellowed Submarine—The very first submarine built by New Jersey schoolteacher John Holland in 1878 will be on display at **THE INTREPID SEA AIR SPACE MUSEUM** beginning 4/11 at 2:30 p.m. The sub, which measures fourteen and a half feet long, will be featured beside a full-size, interactive replica of the *Turtle,* the 1776 sub that attacked a British warship in the Revolutionary War. Tickets are $10, $7.50 for vets and students, $5 for kids 6–11, and $1 for kids 2–5. Youngers are free. Pier 86, Twelfth Ave. and 46th St. (212-245-0072).

Time-out—The art of appropriate toddler discipline does not come naturally to many new parents. To that end, the 92nd Street Y is offering a parenting class entitled **DISCIPLINE: THE ART OF SELF-CONTROL**. 8–9:30 P.M. on 4/6. Admission is $20 per family. 1395 Lexington Ave. (212-996-1100).●

Elijah's Up—Kids grades K–4 and their families can participate in a fun and educational 92nd Street Y **PASSOVER FAMILY WORKSHOP**. Activities include making Seder plates, matzo covers, Elijah's cups, as well as chopping *charoseth* and grinding horseradish. The story of Passover will be told along with creative answers to the Four Questions. From 2 P.M.–4 P.M. on 4/9. Tickets are $20 per family. (See above for info.)●

Head Trip—Private-school art teacher by day, artist of the unusual by night, Susan Mastrangelo is exhibiting works of more than 240 heads at Locus Media gallery. Through the use of paint, clay, and other moldable material, she creates a cross-section of the expressive human race. Through 4/29. **HEADS! HEADS! HEADS!** 594 Broadway, Suite 1010 (212-334-6424).●

Meet the Met—Catch New York Mets catcher **MIKE PIAZZA** in a cereal-eating contest at Planet Hollywood. Competing against the GQ cover boy are kids from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (DARE) to see who can finish one bowlful the quickest. If they aren't full, the contestants can join the slugger at lunch afterwards. 12:30 P.M. on 4/5. 140 W. 57th St. (212-840-8326).●●

For Swingers Only—In a program that explores the connection between jazz and dancing, Wynton Marsalis will host a concert for kids, **WHAT IS SWING DANCING?** The show features the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and a swing dance championship couple. School groups only at 10:30 A.M. and 1 P.M. on 4/7 at the Apollo Theatre, 252 W. 125 St. Tickets are $8 (212-875-5084). The public is welcome at 11 A.M. and 1 P.M. on 4/8 at Alice Tully Hall, 65th St. and Broadway. Tickets are $15 for adults, $10 for kids ages 18 and younger (212-721-6500).●

Monkey Business—At the Hecksher Museum of Art, kids can hear a reading of the classic **CAPS FOR SALE** by Esphyr Slobodkina and then follow educators through art activities related to the story. The museum also has a research center named for the author which contains more of his artistic works. From 11:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M. on 4/8. Tickets are $3 per family. 2 Prime Ave., Huntington, Long Island (631-351-3250). ●

Oh Bother—The Hundred Acre Wood comes to New Jersey. **THE HOUSE AT POOH CORNER**, a production of Theatre IV at The Morris Museum, includes a variety of Winnie-the-Pooh narratives, such as building Eeyore's house, Rabbit's plan for reducing Tigger's bounce, and Christopher Robin's leaving for school. At 11 A.M. and 1:30 P.M. on 4/8. Tickets are $7.75. 6 Normandy Heights Rd., Morristown (973-538-0454).●

Creepy Crawlers—A cast of weird characters, combined with unusual masks, extraordinary movement, and peculiar costumes make for a stage carnival that sets the audience on fire. **FROGS, LIZARDS, ORBS AND SLINKYS**, from the Imago Theatre Mask Ensemble, will runs through 4/9. Tickets are $10, $20, and $25 and can be purchased at the box office or through Telecharge: 212-239-6200. At the New Victory Theater, 209 W. 42nd St. (212-564-4222).●●

Moral Stories—The Vital Theatre Company performs **AESOP'S FABLES**, through a story about Emily, a young girl who calls on her imaginary friends to help her with a book report. Brought to life are *The Boy Who Cried Wolf, The Lion and the Mouse*, and *City Mouse and Country Mouse.* Saturdays at 10:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. through 5/6. Tickets are $10. At 432 W. 42nd St., third floor (212-592-4508).

Marching Mamas—The **MILLION MOM MARCH**, in Washington, D.C., on Mother's Day, May 14, will include mothers and others from across the country protesting gun violence. For information on local organizers, call 888-989-MOMS.

Island Girl—Follow the Caribbean retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* as it is performed by New York Youth Theater, a multiracial, multigenerational company. **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND** plays on the seventh floor of the Central Presbyterian Church, 593 Park Ave., at 64th St., through 4/8. Tickets are $12. (212-888-0696).

Happenings
Destination Earth Day

When he became a parent, singer-songwriter Tom Chapin says, he "stopped worrying about his quarterly returns and started worrying about his generational returns." Twelve years ago, Chapin released the first in a series of albums aimed at kids mainly 11 and younger who haven't gotten into radio yet. The goal, he said, was to expose them to socially conscious causes "in a delightful way." This week marks the release of album No. 8, *This Pretty Planet,* a decidedly soulful, occasionally playful ode to Mother Earth. In "Two Kinds of Seagulls," a duet with Dr. Ruth Westheimer, whom he met on the *QE2,* they croon humorously of the differences between "he-gulls and she-gulls." Chapin will showcase his music, sans Dr. Ruth, at Symphony Space this weekend. Late-boomer parents will be happy to note that Chapin, the star of one of their favorite seventies kids shows, *Make a Wish,* still has it in him to entertain the masses.

Though the concert should put us in the mood for Earth Day on April 22, it's the New York Botanical Garden that wants us to get right down into the thick of it. Its new touchy-feely exhibit *Early Bloomers* shows kids how bulbs grow. They even get to go home with a free paperwhite bulb to further their urban gardening skills. Am I the only one who didn't know garlic and onions were bulbs? SUSAN AVERY

Photographs: left, Kay Wheeler; right, Nancy Brown.

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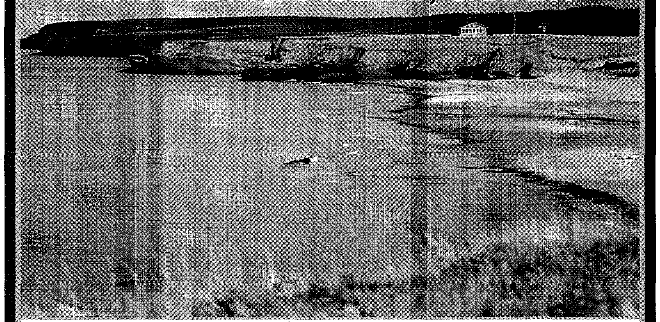

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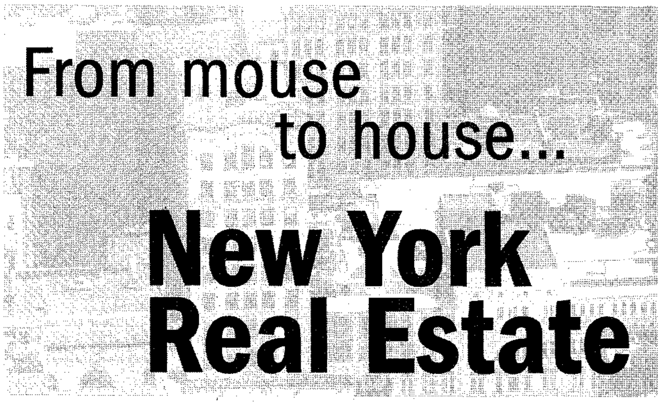

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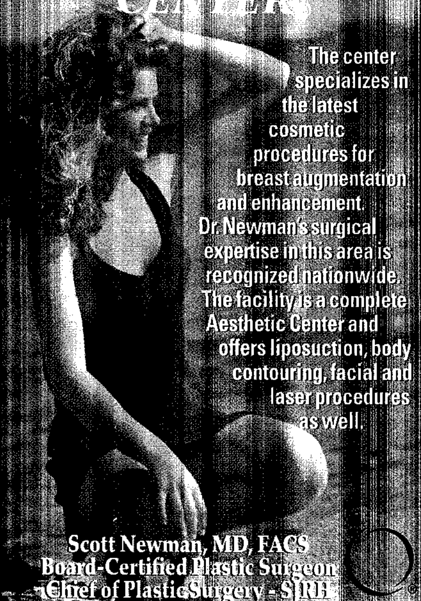

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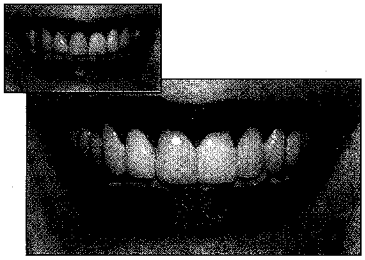

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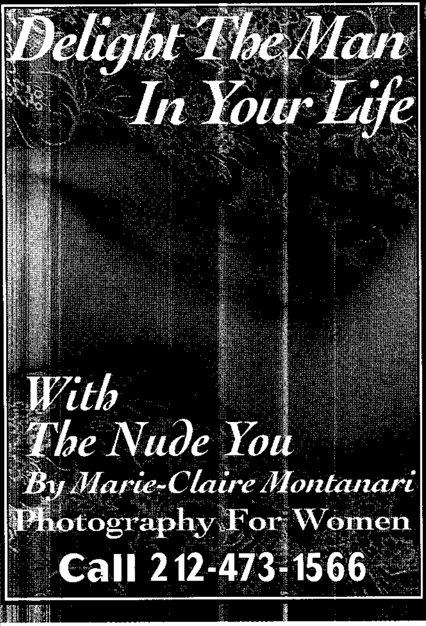

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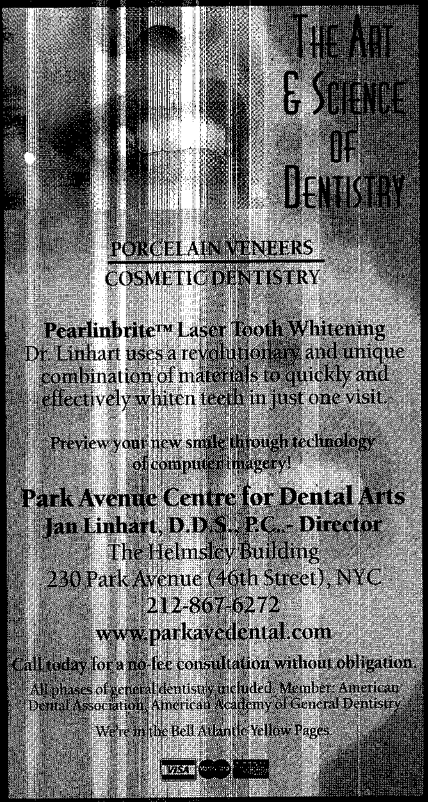

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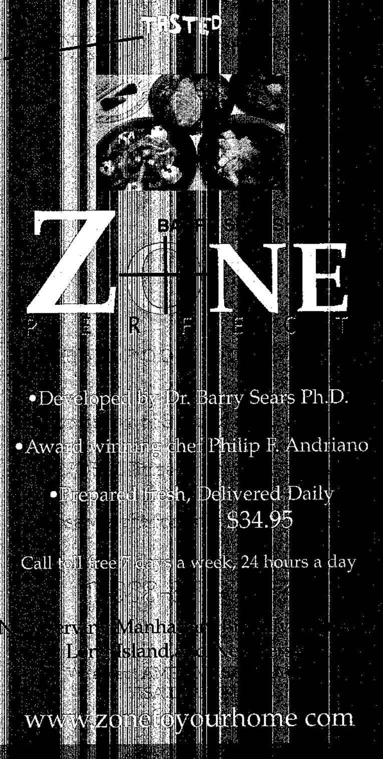

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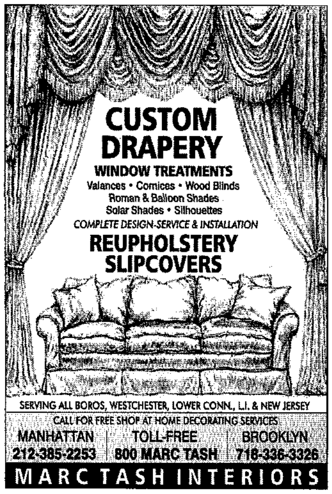

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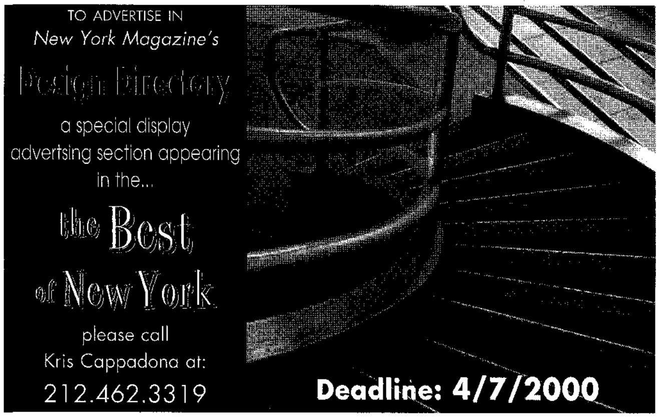

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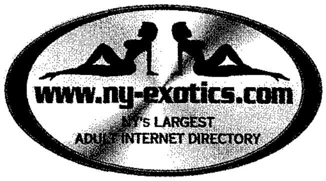

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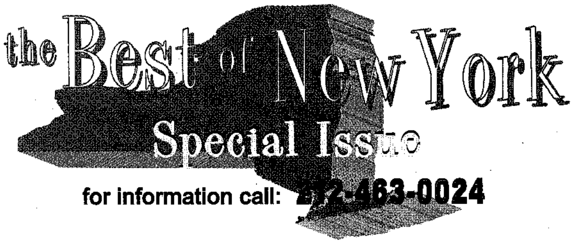
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Striking Beauty—Vivacious, successful, single white Catholic female, 30, slim (115 lbs), tall and shapely, seeks handsome, successful, single white Catholic male, 26-45, no kids. Photo/note. 3720✉

Pretty, Petite, Dark-Eyed MD—Foreign-born, Jewish, in 50s (looks 40). Enjoys home, Wall Street, NYC culture. Seeks her Mr. Right. 3769 ✉☎

Man Willing To Stop—And ask direction(s) (on the road and in life). Widower (already partially domesticated), age LI, unreconstructed public interest lawyer and criminal law professor (Sydney Carton look-alike), still tilting at windmills, abetted by short accomplice, age VI, seeks company of somewhat younger, saucy, feloniously pretty, com/passionate, criminally piquant co-conspirator with possible interest in joining gang permanently. Note/photo/phone, please. 3788 ✉☎

Don't Settle—Very successful, 43, 5'11", 175, handsome, green eyes, wavy hair, athletic, accomplished man. I pride myself on my sharp wit and keen perspective on life. You are: 25-35, model-slim, know what you want and won't settle. You are a cut above and not afraid to admit it. You have uncompromising values, grace and class. My interests include music (jazz), downtown, MOMA, Knicks, fashion and dining. Photo, please. 3680 ✉☎

Nice Guy Seeks Valentine—Dynamic, handsome, leading surgeon, funny, romantic, 5'10", very fit, mid 40s, fun. Desires one lady love under 38 to cherish forever. Phone/photo necessary. 3706 ✉☎

Gay, Good-Looking, In-Shape—60, gentleman, accomplished, stylish, affluent, 5'11", 175 lbs - interested in arts, travel, gardens, country/city life style. Seeks sensitive, bright, creative, younger counterpart for serious exclusive relationship. Photo essential. 3745 ✉

Indian-Born, US-Raised—Pretty, feminine; fit, youthful. Warm, unassuming; balanced. Depth, breadth of heart and mind. Joyful with inner contentment. Pleasures include nature, art, music, simple wonders and gestures. Seek attractive, kind, positive man, 45-55, of integrity and great heart. Note/photo; exchangeable. 3738 ✉☎

Seeking Very Special White Female—24-41. Wanted by very fit, single white male, early 40s - successful professional, stable, never married, honest, very generous, sincere and romantic. This special woman has lots of friends, is successful, and she probably never thought of answering an ad. However, because her qualities include honesty, sincerity and integrity, she is having difficulty meeting someone worthwhile. She is tired of self-centered, immature men and one-way relationships. The club/bar scene is not her style, although an intimate dinner in a special restaurant is. She is independent, but is looking to share her life... enhance it. She is looking for that special someone who is intellectually stimulating, will always be there for her emotionally, yet flexible enough to enable her to grow as an individual. She likes travel, dining, theater, music, country drives in a sports car and working out. She is age 24-41, very fit and adventurous. Comfortable in jeans or a black dress. Only those sincerely interested in a giving relationship, please respond with photo/letter including age, description and especially interests. No smokers, drug users or children, please. 3779 ✉☎

Vivacious, Attractive—Atypical CT senior seeks non-ageist, Jewish male companion who is fit, financially secure, well-educated, full of joie de vivre, 60s-70s. Photo, please. 3721 ✉☎

Feminine Asian Beauty—Shapely, desirable, professional, well-educated lady with long hair, 5'5", early 30s, sensual, personable, seeking successful man. 3796 ✉☎

I've Been Looking For You!—I'm that tall, pretty honey blond with the long legs, who would adore your strange sense of humor if only I had the chance to hear it. You're 40s-early 50s, erudite, trim and fairly tall. I catch a glimpse of you in bookstores, theaters and on the dance floor. Isn't it time we meet? Note and photo, please. 3733 ✉☎

Pretty, Spirited, Spiritual—Quality, accomplished Jewish professional woman seeks soul mate. I am a very youthful 54, 5'6", bright, fit, active, happy, filled with joie de vivre, yet very warm, sensitive, kind, caring and ready. 3783✉☎

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Nice Guy—56, 6'2", 195 lbs, charming, good-looking, divorced attorney/entrepreneur wants to share life with charming, sophisticated, vivacious and intelligent lady, 5'7" plus, 38-50, slim but shapely, nonsmoker. You have a passion for skiing, scuba and boating and already have children. Photo/note. 3800 ✉☎

Long-Legged Lawyer—Tall, fit lady, 40, auburn/hazel, pretty, playful, tactile - loves football, boating, dogs, mysteries, the arts; plays pool, speaks French, cooks, dances, skis (badly). Seeks dynamic, fit professional man, over 40 and over 6'1", for something real. Photo, please. 3762 ✉☎

Springtime Love?—Catholic professional, 42, with many good qualities - sense of humor, intelligence, honesty and integrity, hoping to find a caring female for happiness and love. 3698 ✉☎

Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing—Babe, 35, seeking sandbox mate to schedule play date for outdoor fun, dancing, dining and romantic cooing. If you're a Jewish male, 35-45, nonsmoking, dog lover, send note/photo/phone. 3667 ✉☎

Handsome Judge, Jewish—Athletic, artistic and cultured, seeks pretty, slim professional, 38-48, with similar qualities and interests, for serious relationship. 3755✉☎

Classy, Pretty—Slim Jewish female, athletic, enjoys theater, dining, traveling, family. Seeks male who is fit, golfer, down-to-earth, financially successful, confident, good sense of humor, good values, nonsmoker, 46-54. Send recent photo and short note. 3719 ✉☎

Good-Looking Male, Ivy Grad, 23—Looking for a serious relationship. You are an intelligent Jewish female, 20-25. Photo a must. 3790 ✉☎

Amazing Wealth—Of knowledge. Well, mildly erudite, warm, humorous, sensitive playwright disguised as corporate suit... Would like to meet woman in 40s, who's fit, attractive, interested in the arts and a lasting relationship. (201)/(973) a plus. Note/photo, please. 3688 ✉☎

Gay Female Professional—37, very attractive, slender, seeks meaningful friendship with similar interests - poetry, bicycling, music, humor, stimulating exchange of ideas. 3641 ✉☎

Male, 45, Guitar Teacher—Sensitive, intelligent, emotionally mature, great sense of humor. I love my work, kids, dogs, relaxed dinners and long walks, and would love to meet a woman who values kindness and honest communication as much as I do. 3736 ✉

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Slender, Pretty Redhead—Great figure, 42, 5'7" - loves cooking, foreign films, WNYC and animals. Seeks slim, fit, nice-looking, educated, good-hearted man for relationship. Note/photo. 3727 ✉☎

Single White Male, 24—Teacher's assistant, pursuing a Master's of Social Work. Interests include restaurants, travel and sports. Seeking attractive woman in her 20s, with similar interests. 3683 ✉☎

Sean Connery Type—6'1", 175 lbs, athletic, entrepreneur, free to travel; homes in suburbs, city, country. Interested in meeting fit, sweet, positive Jewish professional, 45-55, who loves classical arts. Photo and note; will reciprocate. 3759 ✉

Tall, Attractive Dental Specialist—Living in picturesque upstate NY (Albany area), Jewish, 41, 6'1", 178 lbs. I enjoy biking, hiking, skiing, traveling, dining, movies, reading, theater, working out. I'm seeking a health-conscious, 30-something, single Jewish female, fit, slim, pretty soul mate who's kind, easygoing and ready to co-author our new life chapter together. Note/photo. 3756 ✉

Attractive Professional Woman—Men's clothing designer, college educated, never married, green eyes, light red hair, Spanish heritage, 5'4", 115 lbs, lives/works in Manhattan. Seeks relationship with interesting, professional gentleman, mid 30s-40s. Note/photo, please. 3777 ✉

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Sophisticated, Shapely, Gentle—Terrific athlete, excellent physical shape, very attractive, well-educated, cultured, well-traveled, stylish, tall Jewish lady - seeking kind, cosmopolitan, successful gentleman (40-55). 4.0 tennis player/avid skier is a plus. Honesty/sincerity/kindness is your real advantage. 3700 ✉☎

Very Pretty, Kind, Bright—Classy, accomplished brunette, fun and in great shape, seeks very handsome man, 45-55, with similar assets, to enjoy each other's company. Orange County. 3797 ✉☎

Pretty, Up, Fun—Thin exec, NYC gal, unique, wants an up guy, 45 plus, due to great family and friends. Photo. 3717 ✉☎

Great Jewish Guy—Handsome, easygoing attorney, 48, 5'8", slim, good sense of humor, many interests, seeks slim Jewish gal, 30-45, for love, marriage and family. Photo, please. 3657 ✉☎

Carolina Guy—Free-ranging professional, 50, vital, easy on eyes, single dad. Teens nearly out door; fresh start begins. Will share city evenings or tennis, eats, arts in (914). He laughs; he listens; he's interest(ing/ed). 3658 ✉☎

Just Right For You—Intelligent, talented, beautiful brunette with hazel eyes, widow, successful, 48, Jewish professional woman; sensitive, romantic, full of life and light. Seeking Jewish male, 48-58, intelligent, emotionally and financially stable, secure, loving nonsmoker, with laughter in his eyes. Note, current photo - happy to reciprocate. 3632 ✉☎

Celebrate Spring—With love and excitement. Petite, beautiful, sophisticated, intelligent MD, loves arts, music, movies, travel. Seeks classy, romantic, successful, cultured man, 50-60. Note/photo. 3794 ✉

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NY Baseball Fan—Shapely, affectionate, slim brunette, 43, seeks classy, funny, passionate, successful but humble man, 40-50, for fun, romance. Photo. 3792 ✉

Sexy, Exotic Ex-Male Model—PhD, 59, seeks educated ex-model/dancer, opera, theater. Photo/note; will exchange. 3730 ✉

Registered Nurse—Single, white, Jewish professional female, 49, honest, looking for single white male, 49 plus, for best friend and lover for life's adventures. Interests: outdoors, travel, NYC. Sense of humor. 3737 ✉☎

Hiker/Film And Theater Buff—Striking, dark-eyed brunette with warmth, intelligence, passion, seeks man between 45 and 55, with similar characteristics, to share interests in film, theater, outdoor activities and lots more! 3673 ✉☎

Very Pretty, Blue-Eyed Blond—MD, 45, 5'8", 120, Jewish Manhattanite, seeks special man for love and marriage. 3691 ✉☎

Looking For A Sincere Relationship—That could eventually lead into marriage. I am a pretty, fit, slim Jewish female, 30s, with auburn hair and green eyes. Love to travel, dine and work out. Being a Wharton grad, I also love culture and sports. I'm a girl of all seasons. Respond if you're an attractive, professional CT/NY male, 34-44. 3748 ✉☎

Smart, Strong And Handsome—Well-traveled exec, 39, 5'11", sensitive, warm and kind. Seeks sweet, slim, caring Jewish female, 28-38, looking for the relationship of a lifetime. Note/photo/phone. 3732 ✉

Be My Best Friend/Lover—I'm a very pretty woman, vivacious, bright, multifaceted, independent, secure, cultured, worldly, warm, fun, (212), 53, Jewish. 3645 ✉☎

Beautiful Chinese—Seeks 33-45, extremely successful, handsome, down-to-earth, marriage-minded gentleman. Photo for reply. 3735 ✉

Healthy, Wealthy And Very Wise—Very successful, super-attractive blond who enjoys city and country living, seeks male counterpart, 40 plus. Note/photo/phone for reply. 3782 ✉☎

Attractive, Feminine—Soft, spiritual gay woman, mid 30s, successful professional, fit, very stable, loves travel, outdoors and living fully. Seeks feminine, spiritual woman for a lifetime of enchanted love. NJ/NY. 3656 ✉☎

Sweep Me Off My Feet—Me: Ralph and Prada (in my dreams); DKNY and Kenneth Cole (in reality). You: Brooks Brothers and Club Monaco. Let's meet at Barneys. Exceedingly beautiful corporate marketer, 32, seeks down-to-earth, entrepreneurial, urban man, adventurous eater and international traveler (no Euro-groovers, please), who has at least heard of T.S. Eliot. Mhttn212@aol.com. Photo. 3799 ✉☎

Looking To Share—Spirited, fun, attractive professional woman, 5'7", seeking tall, happy, funny, secure, sensitive, passionate man, 50-58, who enjoys life. 3665 ✉☎

CT Shoreline—An invitation to meet attractive, petite, active professional female seeking exceptional, accomplished, fit, active white male, 55-65. Love music, opera, arts, travel. 3687 ✉☎

Physically Fit, Athletic—Single white male, 35, MA degree - enjoys movies, music, baseball. Seeks intelligent, caring, physically fit female. 3722 ✉☎

Two Hearts Together—Pretty, sensual, vivacious green-eyed blond, mid 50s, Wall Street-literate and financial planner, seeks widowed or divorced man. This down-to-earth, successful man must be my best friend, love traveling, theater and the arts. If you see life as one big incredible adventure, but you are lacking a best friend, I just may be the answer. 3689 ✉☎

Roses Are Red, Violets Are Blue—This pretty/nice Park Avenue Miss would like a tennis game with you (50ish mensch who's fit, has wit and style). 3742 ✉☎

A Rainy Sunday Morning—We pass each other in Soho seeking a dry place for a coffee and the Times. You smile. I smile. You see an early 30s woman, striking, athletic, slim, probably laughing. I see a 30something male, much the same. We share a coffee, good-natured debate and laughter. Suddenly New York isn't such a cold place. debateandcoffee@aol.com. Photo. 3795 ✉☎

Creative Girl In Corporate World —32, 5'8", 123, blue/brown, hate "Sex in the City"; love Fletch, Beck, running and books; funny, warm, unpretentious and smart. You're friends with your exes, tall, fairly lean, driven, really smart, silly, serious, adventurous and compassionate, 30-38. creativerunner@aol.com. 3693 ✉☎

Elegant, Sophisticated—Balletic woman, 49, serene, happy, French-speaking, Christian but not religious. Wants to share love, truth and beauty with an educated, successful, cultivated, sensual man who is open to the joys of life and free to experience them. If you are an intellectual without arrogance, both stylish and substantive, a gifted listener and an engaging communicator, please write. MDs are welcome, young children are not, for mine is grown. 3784 ✉

Pretty, Petite, Caring—Great smile, slim, youthful Jewish woman. Enjoys cooking, music, yoga. Seeks kind, financially secure Jewish man, 50 plus. 3633 ✉ ☎

Heart Of Gold—Pretty, 5'6" RN with auburn hair, brown eyes, looking to share mid-life pleasures of life with tall, trim, good-looking male. 3768 ✉☎

n Appealing Package—Discover a right, attractive, fit, warm, divorced ewish professional female. Awaiting riendship and romance with intelligent, ind, accomplished man, 44-54, who loves o laugh. 3651 ✉ ☎

Free Samples For Ladies Only—45-year-old, single, Jewish (nonreligious) multimillionaire seeks grown-up mid/late 30s Jewish female stunner for best friend and permanent main squeeze, with lady's choice of exotic dining, foreign film, cool jazz, long walks or hot romance. I am tall, athletic, slim and handsome, with soft brown eyes, quick wit and Ivy PhD; you are absolutely marvelous in every way. No obligation to buy; blue jeans okay. Return any unused portion of boyfriend if not delighted. Photo preferred. 3677 ✉☎

Express Lane—Catholic guy, 43, looking for smart, ambitious, energetic woman who knows herself and what she wants. My photo is on-line. Send me yours to see if fate/date intersect. 3763 ✉☎

Good-Looking Male, 58—Enjoys theater, movies, sports. Seeks nonsmoking, employed woman for permanent relationship. Photo a must. 3709 ✉

Daring, Fun-Loving—White male, 42, 5'9", professional, seeks Asian/white female, 32-42, to share common interests: cinema, arts, lower Manhattan - possibly leading to stable relationship. 3747 ✉☎

Travelin' Man—Hi. I have a cool job which I like, but it requires that I travel to Asia every couple months. Despite these absences, I seek a warm, fun relationship. I'm 40, 5'10", 180, brown/brown, single white male, live upper West. I'm fit and athletic: I am educated, intelligent, entrepreneurial and soulful. I enjoy R&B music scene, motorcycling, languages and long lazy runs. I am seeking an exceptional woman - 24-30 years, preferably Latin, Asian or black, who is educated, beautiful, 5'4" plus and nonsmoking. Photo, please. 3798 ✉☎

Live, Love, Laugh—Jewish male seeks a female to share a lifetime of magic. 3666 ✉ ☎

Tom Cruise Look-Alike—Sexy, tall, dark, 40-year-old, Jewish Wall Street mogul, seeks woman for committed relationship. Be ready to fall in love. Photo/phone. 3775 ✉ ☎

Glamorous, Intelligent, Exciting—White professional female, fitness buff and movie fanatic, looking to share the joys of life with my kindred spirit who is 47-64, well-educated, sensitive, and looking for a long-term relationship. 3744 ✉☎

Lady Divorce Survivor Wanted—Manhattan Jewish male, 60, seeks attractive, sophisticated Manhattan woman with humor and brains. A little baggage okay - no steamer trunks, please! Overstatements don't count, trust me. 3743 ✉☎

GQ Doc—47, dark, hazel, athletic, seeks pretty, petite soul mate, sweet, smart, big heart, 30-44. E-mail: HIMDC@aol.com. Photo. 3714 ✉☎

Spicy, Pretty, Spirited Charmer—With great legs. Enjoys science, music, arts, intellect and men. Seeks gregarious, cultured, optimistic, financially secure professional, 50s, rocket scientist, for laughter, love and life. Note/photo. 3789 ✉☎

Slim And Shapely—Pretty professional female, mid 50s, seeks fun-loving guy for love and happy times. 3731 ✉☎

Seeking Lady, 55-65—Attractive, (212), single white male, 49, blue eyes, thick hair, intelligent, range of interests from baseball to art, and very sincere, seeks commitment to a petite, attractive, very feminine, (212) white female, 55-65. 3679 ✉☎

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Some of the available female clients this week include:

November's Playboy Centerfold, 29, ISO SWM, tall, attractive preferably in the financial industry.

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Very attractive, successful atty, 38, ISO SJM, financially secure.

Stephanie Powers Look-alike, 46 years old, a real head-turner.

Natural Beauty, 34, 5'8", bright, brainy, with excellent figure.

Prominent NY Physician, gorgeous, 48, financially independent.

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Sharon Stone Look-Alike—Short-haired blond, green-eyed, curvaceous, 5'9", fit, radiant smile, former beauty queen, kind, loving, classy yet down-to-earth, well-spoken, accomplished. Enjoys boxing matches, basketball games, music, film. Seeks highly successful, financially secure, well-established, honest, high moral character, 42-58-year-old gentleman for committed relationship. 3765 ✉ ☎

Seeking Special Husband—49-59, for love. I'm a slim, attractive, educated, divorced female, traditional values, caring, honest, nonsmoker. Note. 3713 ✉☎

Fashion-Financial Controller—MBA, 4-lingual, Latin-American male, 32, 5'8", slender, seeks sensitive, romantic, passionate, adventurous woman with capacity of appreciation for the complexity, simplicity and humor of life's experiences - a woman with intellectual curiosity, taste and fashion style. 3711 ✉☎

36-Year-Old Korean-American MD—5'6", medium build, divorced with 7-year-old son, wants to meet an attractive, intelligent professional female. 3725 ✉

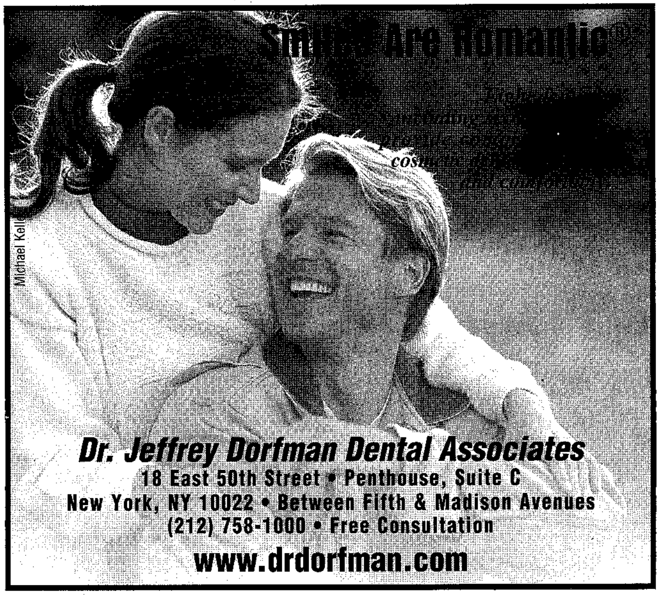
Very Pretty, 31—Tall, blue eyes, Scandinavian background, interested in European travel, politics, nice talks and relaxing at home. Seeking male with similar interests for a relationship. Photo/note, please. 3750 ✉

Intelligent MD—Jewish male, 32, enjoys the arts and sports. I hate crowded clubs. I'm looking for a single female, 23-33, who isn't superficial or excessively materialistic, to share good times and more with. Note/photo/phone. 3705 ✉☎

High-Quality Man—Single white man, 54, very intelligent, nice-looking, physically fit, financially strong, Westchester homeowner, seeks nice, marriage-minded woman. 3663 ✉☎

RSVP: Summer In Greece—NJ/NY romance till then? 40, 5'8", very attractive, affectionate medical professional, Greek-American, seeks similarly educated (MD, DMD, MBA, PhD) male (38-48), who is marriage/family-minded. Note/photo/phone. No dependents. 3654✉☎

Curvy, Intelligent, Divorced Woman—46, seeks Jewish male for romance. 3739✉☎



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Strong-Hearted, NJ—Italian-American female, professional, in search of stout-hearted, accomplished male counterpart, 55-65, with health-filled lifestyle, to share the incredible creation of a monogamous relationship woven in life's rewarding experience, past, present and future. Multiple interests to share and explore together. Note/photo/phone, please. 3772 ✉☎

Female Ex-Hippie, Young 50—Sold out to yuppiedom but wants to have fun. Things are nice but don't rule my life. 5'5", medium size, brown hair, brown eyes, good looks, really cooks, a sweet chick who loves flicks. Let's kick back and have a chat. Offbeat's a treat, so let's meet. 3734✉☎

Stunning, Curvaceous Teacher—Seeks nonsmoking soul mate, 48-58. 3752✉☎

Somewhat Wealthy—Jewish market investor and university professor in NYC and NJ, a bit over 50, seeks woman, 36-43, wanting marriage, hopefully with children. I am also very athletic and handsome. Prefer a bright woman such as an MD or JD - but no degrees also okay. E-mail: sharpguy4U@aol.com or 3695✉☎

Self-Made, Street-Smart—Successful entrepreneur, unique, multifaceted, intelligent, ambitious, 58, 6'3", 230, seeks a real beautiful soul mate with a great figure, 35-50. Photo. 3774 ✉☎

Male Yoga Instructor, 42—In real estate, seeks springtime romance, possibly more with attractive female, 32-38. 3692 ✉☎

Model, Very Blond Grace Kelly Type—Blue eyes, 40s, classic and tennis lover, warm and spirited, interested in good conversation and loving relationship. 3728✉☎

Fun-To-Be-With—29, 5'8", blue eyes, handsome, well-to-do, easygoing and considerate... This foundation president enjoys tennis, travel, casinos, theater and sporting events. Seeks fit and friendly female. Note/photo. 3778 ✉ or: Josh95255@aol.com

Raven-Haired Beauty—Gorgeous smile, seeking good man, late 30s-50, for romance and possibly living happily ever after. Enjoys working out, dining out, travel. Photo, please. 3761 ✉

Adorable Size-4 Blond—Businesswoman seeks successful, sophisticated businessman, 60-70. (212) only. 3636 ✉☎

Young Racquel Welch-Type—5'7", Jewish, seeks tall, handsome man with integrity, class, sense of humor, 40-60, for love, laughter and forever? Photo. 3655✉☎

One-In-A-Million—Energetic, romantic, handsome, fun Jewish male, 55, kind, communicative, successful, seeking the love of my life. Please write a note today with photo. Maybe we will meet soon! 3793✉☎

Blond, Beautiful, Brainy Woman—40s, looking for successful, sane man for romance with a future. 3707 ✉

Great Catch!—Single white male, 35, good-looking, well-versed, 5'10", successful, seeks very attractive female in her 20s. Photo required. 3710 ✉☎

Attention Gentlemen, Ages 55-65:—My friends tell me my standards are too high, but I know you exist. You are a kind, cultured, attractive, nonsmoking, successful and financially secure man with a sense of humor, a zest for life and a taste for all that NYC has to offer. If you fit this description, you will meet an extremely beautiful and intelligent, Jewish, successful professional woman, tall, blond, 50s, who enjoys classical music, opera, theater, fine dining, the excitement of the city and the tranquility of the country, and is looking to share it with the right man. 3646 ✉☎

Attractive Arts Professional—Emotionally and financially secure woman, cultured, compassionate, upbeat, reflective, seeks same in 50-plus Jewish man. 3787 ✉☎

Tall, Dark And Handsome—Divorced Jewish professional male, 45, fit, olympic-humored, incredibly handsome, uncommonly intelligent, absolutely perfect in every way. I'd like to meet a woman who'll humor me when I get like this. 3751✉☎

Vibrant, Warm, Pretty Widow—Late 60s, NY actress - I love theater, film, my art class, my grandchildren, travel, walks on the beach at my house on Fire Island. Seeking a cuddly man with a funny bone and a zest for life to care for and share all of the above and more. 3754 ✉☎

Muscular, Well-Defined Build—Handsome, divorced white male, 42, educated, successful professional - enjoys staying in shape, traveling. Seeking pretty, slim, single white female, successful, with beautiful heart, preferably from LI. Photo/note. 3770 ✉☎

Blue-Eyed, Pretty Woman—Loves city sophistication and country simplicity. Let's explore together. I'm 5'4", trim, curvy, young mid 50s, professional. Want emotionally secure, attractive match. 3757✉☎

Petite, Attractive And Upbeat—Jewish woman, Westchester, seeks a caring man with a sense of humor, 57-67, to share the fine and simple things in life and the joy of just being together. 3716 ✉☎

Socialite—Seeks comparable gentleman (50s-70) who appreciates a lady who is elegant and proper yet sexy and passionate. Note/photo a must. 3791 ✉

Blond Ambition—Head-turning, beautiful VP for Fortune 500, shapely, toned, single Jewish female, 5'5", long golden hair, hazel eyes, incredible smile, seeks very handsome, rugged, single Jewish male - CEO, MD, JD or the like, 40-49, 5'10" plus, for lasting relationship leading to marriage/family. Humor and a full head of hair a plus! Photo/phone. 3785 ✉☎

Love, Compassion And Fun—Manhattan, handsome retired lawyer, 6', 175 lbs, brown hair, athletic, affectionate, gentle, imaginative. Loves humor, racquetball, theater, music, history, reading, ideas, good nutrition. Nonreligious Jewish. Seeks slim, educated, happy 60ish woman, 5'5"-5'8". Photo/letter. 3741 ✉

Are We A Match?—Attractive, spirited, bright, warm blond woman, late 30s, looking for a man, 35-45, who enjoys sharing life's adventures. If you are optimistic, well-educated and successful, I'd love to hear from you. Christian, marriage/family-minded. 3758 ✉☎

Y2K Has Come And Gone—And I'm still here. Petite, professional, Jewish, mid-30s female who enjoys NYC as well as Atlantic City, fine hotels as well as camping. Note/phone/photo optional. 3760✉☎

Petite, Sweet, Athletic And Sexy—Beautiful, single black female, great sense of humor, cultured and outgoing, seeks exciting man - 35 plus, tall, handsome professional and nonsmoker. Must be fit, family-oriented, strong and enjoy the finer things in life. Race and religion open. Send note and photo; you'll be glad you did. 3724 ✉☎

More Than Just A Pretty Face—Very attractive, fit, sophisticated, mid 40s woman seeking soulmate. I am vivacious, independent, smart, warm, honest, happy, classy and slim. Enjoy fine food, travel, music, dancing, skiing, movies and theater. Seeking a kind, fit, handsome, fun-loving, financially and emotionally stable, intellectual, compassionate man of substance. Note/phone/photo a must. 3674 ✉☎

World Traveler—Seeks female best friend and lover, 50-60, vivacious, enthusiastic, willing to take chances. I am a caring, sensitive man, 5'9", 185 lbs, blue eyes, graying hair, in excellent health. I am willing to share travel, hiking, art, photography, cooking. Photo, please. 3776✉☎

Tall, Witty Jewish Executive—49, handsome, seeks attractive, fit woman to share our lust for life. Note/phone. 3749 ✉

NYMessage

Friends Wanted—By divorced, classy professional, 50, for NYC fun/travel. 3767✉☎

Attentive Man—Tall, handsome, 59, seeks intense, passionate, romantic Manhattan woman, 45-50. Recent photo. 3634 ✉☎

Very Pretty Blonde—51, seeks older, accomplished man (to 68). Manhattanite (Protestant), 5'7", slim, size 8, gym-fit, classy, educated, former professional. Travels, golfs, upbeat, no kids, nonsmoker, sane, fun-loving, affectionate, romantic. Seeks single man. Please be successful, fit, 55-68. All letters answered. Bio and pix. 3668 ✉☎

Very Attractive, Vivacious, Vibrant—Manhattan lady, 40, professional with blond hair, will definitely bring a twinkle to your eye. Upbeat, warm, sincere, empathic and cuddly. Enjoys fine dining, theater, travel and dogs. Seeks successful, quality gentleman who wishes to meet over a glass of champagne. Photo/personal note appreciated. 3786 ✉ ☎

Pretty, Elegant, Affluent—Woman seeks MD/lawyer/CEO, 60-65. Photo. 3715✉☎

Pretty, Blond And Polished—Green eyes, very slender, radiant smile, warm heart. Enjoy sports, sailing, the arts. Loves to travel. Seeks refined man, 54 plus, professional, fit, flexible and fun. 3780 ✉☎

Attractive, Fit LI Brunette—Jewish widow seeks to share happy times with 70-plus man. Golf a plus. 3771 ✉

Dancing Psychiatrist—(212) and (732); 53, 6'2", 190 lbs, fit and handsome (children 11 and 9), enjoys sports, dancing (watching and doing), and other arts. Desires 38-49-year-old, trim, fit, good-hearted, humorous, intelligent - likes children and animals, the arts and dances! Send bio and full-length photo. 3708✉☎

Pretty NJ Woman, 60—Seeks contemporary gentleman to share life's offerings. I am single, Christian, educated, slim, 5'4", financially secure. My interests include opera, theater, books, travel, dining, walking, stimulating conversation. Please include a recent clear photo. 3702 ✉☎

Lively, Young 60s—Seeks caring, healthy man. Share Mitzvahs, music. 3671 ✉☎

Good-Hearted, Good-Looking—Professional Jewish male, 5'9", 38, seeks pretty, slim Jewish female, 20s-30s, for fun and romance. Note/photo. 3690✉☎

Pretty Spring Flower—Jewish, 44, ready to be picked by a man with the right stuff. Note/photo, please. 3660 ✉☎

Looking For You—Handsome, 38, 6'1", 185 lbs, fit, athletic build, Jewish, successful, intelligent, funny, good heart, sincere - seeks pretty female, slender, fit, outgoing. Photo a must. 3773 ✉☎

Serious Female Skier, Golfer—Concert and theatergoer, 5'8", very slim, hopin to meet Jewish male, 59-69, who like and can afford this lifestyle - emotionall insecure is okay. Photo, note and e-mai please. 3723 ✉

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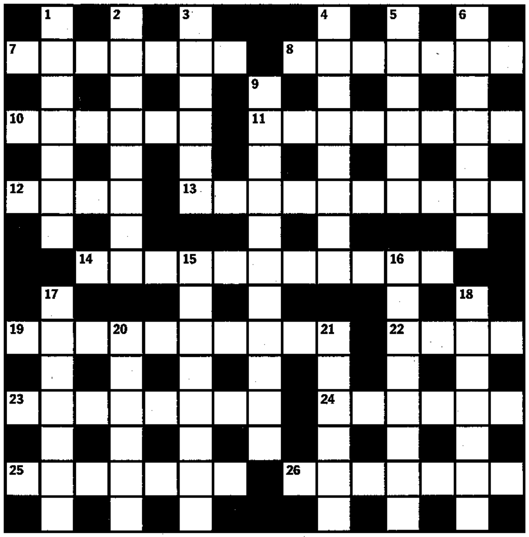
The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS

7 Porter is about to dispatch messenger. (7)
8 Mother's returning to Virginia, dressed in gold, in Russian vessel. (7)
10 Coward's whirlwind success. (6)
11 Admitting everyone is in arrears. (8)
12 Divine waitress. (4)
13 Used by riders—but they're not riding breeches. (10)
14 Having no grave doubts? (4,7)
19 He was a student of equestrian form. (7,3)
22 Exploit a twist of fate. (4)
23 I'd copies made of TV soaps, perhaps. (8)
24 One who treats vile disorder? Nonsense. (6)
25 Challenging sanctimonious fashion designer. (7)
26 Rider finds it difficult to hold a horse. (7)



DOWN

1 One who is against work has a problem. (7)
2 We are its ruin, so to speak. (2,2,4)
3 Tries out wiry muscles? (6)
4 Happen to be on the level, but gain no applause. (4,4)
5 She plays a Shakespearian part for the network. (6)
6 Ran wild in captivity, causing dreadful loss of life. (7)
9 Supporter of something wicked. (11)
15 The sort of contest that goes on in the ring. (4-4)
16 Violate copyright, for example, of refining process. (8)
17 A spider possibly saved Bruce from it. (7)
18 River of wine. (7)
20 Affected type from the Paris model agency. (6)
21 Officer assisting general in plan that's crazy. (6)

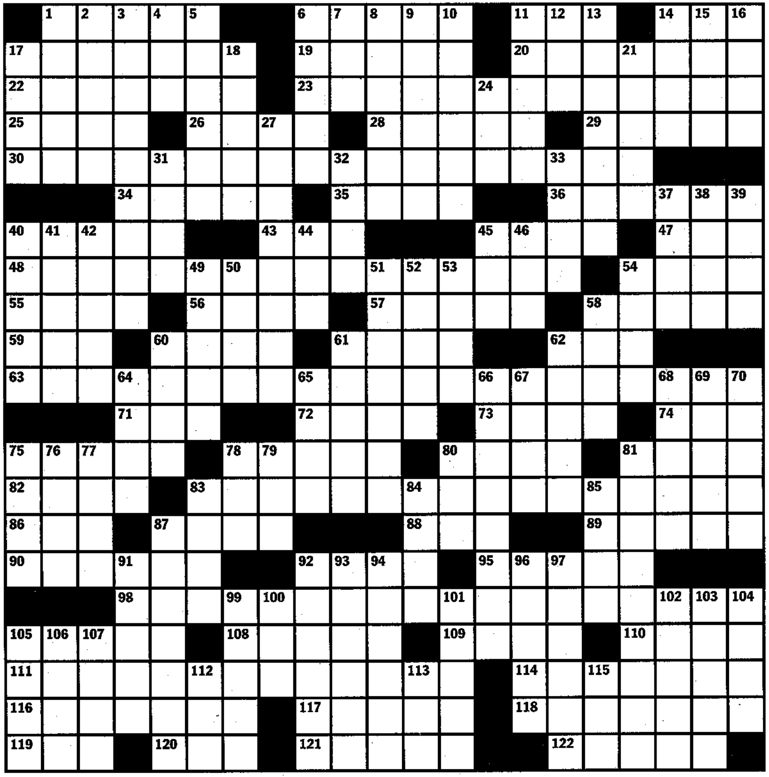
'Roman Quorum': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS

1 Tutor's client
6 Half of Cass Elliot's group
11 Transmit Morse code
14 Murray Schisgal play, 1964
17 Serenaded at Christmas
19 Lancaster Valley Mennonites
20 Penalty for a balk
22 Enliven
23 Roman who said "Achoo Brutus"?
25 Half-moon tide
26 Angel's nimbus
28 Jousting weapon
29 Distrustful
30 Outdoor assassin's confession?
34 Oregon's capital
35 Minus
36 Followed as a result
40 Hoglike beast
43 Pay dirt
45 Eagerly excited
47 Carioca's city
48 Porgy's Roman song?
54 Cold-cream containers
55 Annoying phone signal
56 Soon
57 —— fours (creeping)
58 Free-for-all
59 Reverse curve
60 Unless, at law
61 Traverse the pool
62 Peg for Tiger Woods
63 Where odes were sold?
71 Whichever
72 Explorer Hedin
73 Snow-removal implement
74 Schlep
75 Induce a smile
78 Up —— (equaling the norm)
80 Harold of old comics
81 The "T" in TV
82 Garrison
83 Colosseum exhortation?
86 Scott Joplin's music
87 Patrick Dennis's Auntie
88 Scandinavian rug
89 Fictional Frome
90 Titania's spouse
92 This, in Cadiz
95 Disney deer
98 About to go?
105 Oodles
108 Wind: prefix
109 Pricey
110 Seed covering
111 Preferred brand of coffee?
114 Do an impersonation of
116 Notable
117 Songsmith Paul and family
118 "No No" girl
119 Leave the singles scene
120 Judge Bean
121 Officiated at blackjack
122 Like a snoop

DOWN

1 Glazier's items
2 Dickens's Heep
3 Pretentiousness
4 Stevedores' org.
5 Fatal
6 Rank above captain
7 —— Darya, Aral Sea tributary
8 Barbara Bush's dog
9 Orientals
10 Switches tracks
11 "We're Off —— the Wizard"
12 Gloucester's cape
13 Getting the rind off
14 Loll about
15 Pusher's buyer
16 Mucho
17 "Who —— Turn To?"
18 1770s American diplomat Silas
21 Foamy brews
24 Ed. edifice
27 Furniture-polish ingredient
31 Canvas cover, for short
32 Butter look-alike
33 Long long time
37 Eurasian range
38 Where Tipperary is
39 Prescription amount
40 Lama's land
41 Spurting
42 Western brigade
44 End of Rembrandt's name
45 Ocean abbr.
46 Baseball's Hodges
49 Not the clergy
50 "Meet Me —— Louis"
51 Opposite of everyplace
52 Labor coalition
53 Pat down
54 Scoff (at)
58 Cat call
60 Clementine's shoe size
61 Whodunit writer —— Dine
62 Leather strip
64 Booby-prize finish
65 Nickname of hockey great Phil
66 In running order
67 Kennel pest
68 First Hebrew letter
69 Mea ——
70 Greek sea: var.
75 Nappy hairdo
76 Ruth's homeland
77 Try to persuade
78 "Home Improvement" star Allen
79 Wallet smallie
80 Gift from Santa
81 Spruces up
83 Kind of ad
84 It turned into a prince
85 Country singer McEntire
87 Gila, for one
91 "The Thinker" sculptor
92 "The stag at —— drunk his fill": Scott
93 De Beauvoir or Signoret
94 Russian carriage
96 Delon of cinéma
97 Oakley portrayer
99 Thoughtlessly fast
100 Bus.-letter insert
101 I.e., spelled out
102 Plenty sore
103 ——-gritty
104 Choristers' club
105 Culinary hodgepodge
106 Arrived
107 LSD
112 Numero ——
113 President before Herb
115 Daughter of Cadmus



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 127

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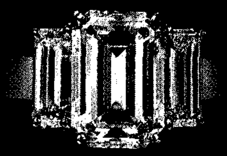

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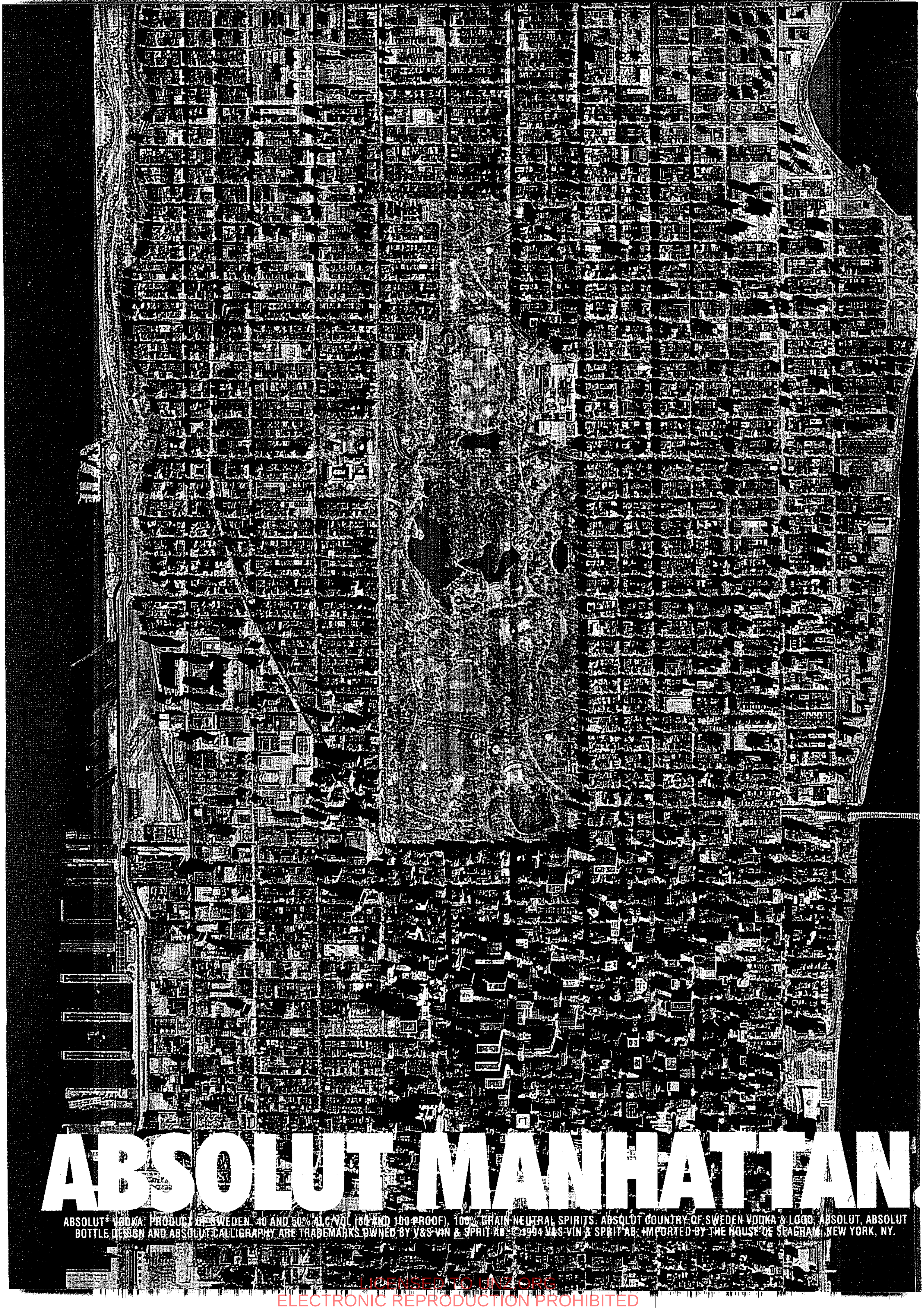

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